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BOB DAVIS RECALLS:
Sixty True Stories of Love
and Laughter and Tears

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BOB DAVIS RECALLS: Sixty True Stories of Love and Laughter and Tears

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"OVER MY LEFT SHOULDER"



D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
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APOLOGIA

The sixty separate stories contained in this volume are similar in biographical purpose and effect to the fifty-six that appeared in the previous collection published by D. Appleton and Company, entitled *Over My Left Shoulder*, by Robert H. Davis, and are by the same author. Both groups of recollections appeared originally on the editorial page of the *New York Sun* under the title *Bob Davis Recalls*. It is deemed expedient by both the publishers and the writer to issue this volume bearing the latter title, now well known to the reading public. I am further impressed as to the necessity for this rechristening by the discovery that "Robert H. Davis" is known only to the Income Tax Commissioner, and perhaps by him not too favorably; whereas numberless persons are familiar with the shorter and uglier name of

BOB DAVIS.

New York.

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BOB DAVIS RECALLS:
Sixty True Stories of Love
and Laughter and Tears

BOB DAVIS RECALLS

I

THE PERFECT LOVE STORY, PRODUCT OF NEW ENGLAND

AT a recent public dinner I found myself seated within easy conversational distance of the Right Reverend William T. Manning, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of New York. Between the turtle soup and the breast of chicken I told him a story that had come to me from unimpeachable sources.

“Why don’t you write that for your *Sun* columns?” was his reply. “It is a perfect love story.”

“ . . . Perhaps, some day.”

As I was leaving the banquet hall later in the evening a friend accosted me with the remark: “I saw you talking the Bishop to death. What were you telling him?”

“Watch *The Sun*,” I said. “You’ll find it there.”

* * *

This is the tale in full that I poured into the episcopal ear:

In the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut, about 1845, there lived a girl by the name of Sylvia

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Nichols, the seventh in a family of nine children. Despite the fact that she was deeply religious and sang in the church choir she was known as the "Belle of Bridgeport." Her father conducted a foundry.

In the same city there resided a prosperous naval outfitter who fashioned the smart costumes and sartorial splendor for the swank sea captains and officers who sailed the bounding main from the ports along the Connecticut coast. Associated with him was a younger son who, because of his predilection for fashionable duds and a disposition to take life with continuous gayety, earned for himself the sobriquet of "Dandy." He was in all probability the first village cut-up in the purlieus of that puritanical settlement.

One crisp Sunday morning the outfitter's son, garbed in the best-fitting raiment of the time, betook himself to church, where in the course of the service he heard the silver voiced Sylvia Nichols sing a sacred solo. That the notes penetrated deep within him was evidenced by the fact of his frequent reappearance, always with meticulous regard for his personal adornment. Bridgeport society began to observe a pronounced change in the jocund youth and made no little of his altering under some refining influence.

Resort to the conventions brought about an introduction to the Belle of Bridgeport and the serious business of honest courtship progressed to the

A PERFECT LOVE STORY

point where the completely overpowered suitor called upon the father of the adored and asked her hand in marriage. The simple molder of metals looked with bewilderment upon the fawn trousers, stock collar, bell-shaped coat and fuzzy hat of the lovelorn petitioner who went to the bottom of his collection for effects.

"It is not within my power to bestow or withhold," said he. "Sylvia alone must render that decision. Who can define her choice? Not I. Take your case to her."

He did.

"I am honored by your proposal," said Sylvia. "I esteem and admire you. I feel, however, that I should define my state of mind concerning my choice of a husband. I wish to dedicate my life to Christian effort and, all things being equal, I look forward to becoming the wife of a minister. You may not be so inclined, nor is it fair of me to ask that you devote your whole existence to a career that might be a sacrifice. If you feel that you could. . . ."

He interrupted her with the fervid declaration that he would set aside all other purposes and fit himself for the ministry; that his one earnest hope, his single ambition, was to make himself worthy of her hand and of her love for all time. "I will make the ministry my vocation. The preliminary steps shall be taken at once. When I am prepared to preach from the pulpit you are to

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hear my first sermon. That shall be the test of my sincerity. I ask only the time."

"I will wait for you," replied Sylvia Nichols, "with prayers."

Within a fortnight a New York theological seminary had a young divinity student from Bridgeport with its registrar. At the proper time a full-fledged Episcopalian minister appeared in the pulpit of a little church in Branford, Connecticut, and preached his first sermon to a congregation among which sat the Belle of Bridgeport, her hands clasped in ecstasy not transcended even by her beauty. When the last page had been turned and the communicants had departed Sylvia Nichols arose from an attitude of prayer, walked as one entranced up the aisle, laid both of her blessed hands in the keeping of the young minister and said:

"I will be your wife."

They were married in Branford and remained there for several years. A son and a daughter were born. Then came the call from the Far West; and with a Mason and Hamlin organ, which Sylvia played, an assortment of hymnals, the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible they fared forth across the continent, coming at last to the plains. There, among the Indians, the minister and his wife and children halted to perform the services of a missionary. He built crude churches on the plains, carried the Cross to the red men, suc-

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cored the emigrants and rendered Christian service to mankind. There on the banks of the Missouri two more sons were born, and later, carried onward by the tides of progress, the group of six moved forward by easy stages to the Pacific coast, into California and along the Nevada Sierras.

At best the West was an ordeal for ministers of the Gospel, but the faith of that New England couple brought them through. The children were educated, went out into the world, married, and like most New Englanders had frequent reunions. The mirthful and buoyant nature of the Bridgeport boy who married the belle of the town never left him. He was good humor personified, and honest laughter was the breath of life to him. Not during the whole fifty-odd years of their married life did that couple speak a harsh word one to the other or mar the happiness of those around them.

They passed away in 1905 within a few months of each other, and they sleep in the high Sierras side by side, one headstone recording their existence and their immortal love.

* * *

That was the story I was telling the Bishop at the Commodore banquet; and for the eye of my friend who wanted to know the details I take this occasion to impart the gratifying truth that Sylvia Nichols and her minister were my mother and father.

II

A PHILOSOPHICAL PILGRIMAGE WITH THE BELOVED O. HENRY

SOMEWHERE along about 1906, in the summer, O. Henry came into my office and inquired as to what I knew about deep-sea angling.

"Everything there is to know," I announced in a firm, ringing voice and without hesitation, indecision being fatal when a fishing trip is under consideration.

"Got plenty of rods, reels and lines?" he asked.

"Nothing but."

He began to count upon his fingers.

"And kin you get some bait?"

"Clams, shedders and blood worms," I enumerated as he kept tally.

"Boat and guide, mister?" His blue eyes were filled with anxiety.

"The best. And also a lunch basket packed with all the—"

"That will do, kind sir. You have said enough; and more than I had expected to hear," he announced. "As for me, I will furnish something that up to now has been overlooked. I refer to the broad, bounding Atlantic Ocean. That is my con-

A PILGRIMAGE WITH O. HENRY

tribution. When do we push off in the lugger?"

"Make it Friday next," said I. "We start from Port Washington, Long Island, drift down the bay on the outgoing tide, round Sands Point, anchor off Howard Gould's estate and begin to fish on the flow."

"With real hooks?" was the childlike query.

We found a competent boatman and an incompetent boat at a water-front restaurant in Port Washington. While waiting for the bait we were driven out into the open by the flies. They swarmed over the Caliph of Bagdad and drove him frantic.

"Which one of them do you suppose it was that recognized me?" he asked petulantly.

We got away finally and drifted out on an oily tide through a procession of seaweed strewn with flotsam and jetsam. The boatman, unaware of the precious cargo he had on board, began to string the author of *The Gentle Grafters*, but quit definitely when O. Henry asked him if a soft-shelled clam could put up a good fight when taken on an artificial fly. We followed the ebb until it flattened, then threw out the anchor. A pitiless sun took up the work of parboiling both of us, but O. Henry, who was of a florid complexion and thin-skinned, cooked first and became as pink as a boiled lobster.

The fishing was atrocious and the small fry swiped bait as fast as we got it on the hooks.

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Three patient hours resulted in two flounders and three sea robins.

"Let's put the lugger on Mr. Gould's beach," suggested the author, "and bask in the predatory atmosphere of inherited wealth. He can't do any more than ask us in to lunch. Do you reckon he would like to have these two flounders, or do you want to keep yours?"

The landing was made near three bathhouses connected by the boardwalk to the broad lawn. In the welcome shade of the structures we sprawled on the yellow sand and made overtures to the lunch basket. A gentle breeze blowing seaward from the Gould garden brought the perfume of flowers and wet grass. Under its influence O. Henry turned to philosophizing until finally his thoughts led him to the salability of the printed word.

"For example, here is a notebook," he said, taking the sheaf from his coat pocket. "It contains a dozen sheets of blank, white paper. With a lead pencil on these several sheets I write a tale three or four thousand words in length. You buy the story and print it in one of the magazines you edit. If it is a good story it gets into a book, or perhaps is dramatized and put on the stage. Very well; that's a beginning that has to do with its earning power. I begin to get royalties on the volume, the serial rights, the drama and maybe some day a motion picture. It goes on and on

A PILGRIMAGE WITH O. HENRY

reaping profit and yet it is never anything but the figment of my imagination, converted into words. Is that clear?"

He paused and ran a stream of sand through his hands one above the other like an hourglass, his eyes searching the distant horizons of the Sound. "It emanates from my mind and but for the presence of the printed name of the writer would lose its identity. But it survives, perhaps exists through the ages."

Another stream of sand flowed from hand to hand and trickled away.

"Now I have a daughter," he continued after a long pause, "a child of my own flesh and blood, bone of my bone. She looks and acts like me. She is the most precious possession I have. She is a material, breathing entity, another me. In three score years and ten, according to the Biblical injunction, she will return to the elements, and that will be the absolute last of Margaret Porter, daughter of O. Henry. But the written words set down methodically, laboriously and with infinite pains on these sheets of white paper, fugitive reflections at best, live on. Queer, isn't it? Flesh: mortal. Thought: immortal."

Comment on my part seemed out of place. He fussed about in the yellow sand and uncovered a tortoise shell hairpin from which the luster had faded.

"Here's another story," was his comment.

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“Who owned it? Lady in waiting or lady in wading? Maid or mistress? White or black? May be celluloid. Touch a match to it. If it blows up—”

I took the object from his plump fingers and placed it in my pocket. That hairpin is still in my possession. In a moment his volatile imagination took him out to sea again. Rising and dusting his hands, he walked down to the boat.

“Your friend seems to be kind of a nut,” remarked the boatman, clamping his teeth on a slab of chewing tobacco. “What’s his name?”

“O. Henry,” I replied with emphasis.

Something seemed to struggle for exit from the fisherman’s mind. “O—o—o—! Henry. I heard my daughter speakin’ about him lately. One of them writer fellers. Mebby he’s all right at that. He’s a callin’ us.”

The author of *The Trimmed Lamp*—and others—wanted to go home. Clumsily but with a certain genuine consideration the bayman folded up his coat and made in the stern a soft seat for his odd passenger, and placed an old tarpaulin over the sunburned hands. That was for his daughter, perhaps. Nevertheless. . . .

“The thing I like most about this place,” said the parboiled angler at the depot, “is the railroad that runs out of it toward Manhattan. Do you suppose there is room in the ice cooler for both of my hands at once?”

III

A DOCTOR, A PATIENT AND THE CODE OF THE FOREST

THIS is a tale of the woods and the waters, of the wild spaces, of the frontier that divides two countries; a tale of the moral and spiritual influence that the great outdoors has upon small boys and men alike; a tale of the courage, the friendship, the fraternity that unite us one to the other.

* * *

There was a touch of spring in the air, a tinge of green upon the earth, and Central Park, in the feathery chiffon of verdant June, was weaving a garment for the elms and lilacs. Across the lawns, vanguard of the fecund spring, hopped a delegation of robins, resting on the northern flight. The air was redolent with the perfume of new grass and of pale bursting foliage coming back to life.

Dr. Ross McPherson and I, rambling through the labyrinth of highways, inhaled the air joyously.

“I need a vacation,” said the medico. “I want to go fishing; far enough away to escape the tele-

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phone. What can you offer in the shape of suggestions? Any time after the fifteenth of June. Come, now."

"What's the matter with New Brunswick?" I answered. "Bass, trout, white perch and northern pike."

"Sounds good to me. Who'll we take with us?"

"Oh, some established philosopher like Simeon Ford."

"Great! Line him up at once."

When we met at the Grand Central Doc had two grips, a duffle bag and a satchel packed with all kinds of surgical instruments.

"Thought we were going on a vacation," commented Sim Ford, glancing at the tools.

"Sure," said Doc; "but I always go armed. When a doctor is needed he is needed badly, and this kit is with me for the whole route."

We went right through via Boston to the northern corner of Maine, into New Brunswick and the Paffrey Lake country.

A motor boat planned to meet us at the lower lagoon, but owing to a high wind the craft was delayed. In order to get into the lee we hailed three kids and crossed the stream in a putt-putt skiff that took us into quiet water, where we landed with our duffle under some pine trees. The boys hustled all the luggage and received us like long lost brothers. I handed the eldest some loose silver, but he refused to accept it. "We never

THE CODE OF THE FOREST

take anything from fishermen," he said. "No, sir."

I dropped the money into his upper shirt pocket and told him to split it among the trio. Finally our motor boat came along and we bade the boys farewell. They invited us to visit them again on the way back. Every one of them was a trained woodsman.

When we had gone a mile or so Sim Ford put his hand into his coat pocket and with a loud exclamation withdrew all of the coin I had forced upon the boy camper. Sim handed it over to me with a broad smile. "Here's your gold, Mr. Davis. Gentlemen of the great open spaces are above receiving dross. *Noblesse oblige*. The little devil dropped it into my pocket unbeknown to me."

"Remarkable," I commented, "that the boy gave it back."

"It is much more remarkable, Mr. Davis, that I gave it back," retorted Sim Ford.

During the two weeks we spent in that region the surgeon's kit remained unopened. Doc was ever on the alert to perform some professional service for the good of humanity. But nothing happened. The little black bag seemed to be just an assortment of useless implements, iodine and gauze.

* * *

We were all packed up ready to leave for home.

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Doc, sunburned and fit, was seated on the steps of our cabin with the surgeon's grip beside him. Sim Ford was reading the last chapters of *Barcheater Towers*. Across the lake echoed the chug-chug of a motor boat coming under forced draft. When the keel touched the beach the motorman lifted the limp figure of a boy from the cockpit.

"This kid put an ax in his leg and I think he is bleeding to death," said he, running up the shale.

"Bring him to me!" shouted Doc, diving into his mysterious black bag, from which emerged all the marvelous equipment for a surgical operation, even to a pair of white rubber gloves.

"Hot water . . . towels . . . put him on my bed and get his clothes off. . . . I'll be ready in a minute." The boy was as pallid as death and his attire was saturated with blood.

With deft and delicate fingers the medical man prepared his needle and thread to tie an artery and to sew up a gash five inches long which began at the crown of the shinbone and ran deep into the fleshy part of the youngster's leg, from which the blood gushed slowly but persistently. Doc smoothed the damp hair from the boy's forehead and got his attention. "Young man, you must help me. Seven stitches, and they'll all hurt. Are you game?"

"Yes . . . sir," faintly.

"And you'll lie still?"

"I won't . . . move . . . doctor."

THE CODE OF THE FOREST

"Fine. Now shut your teeth. Steady."

Seven times the terrible needle penetrated the flesh, dragging its hot thread across the gash until the wound was finally closed and the bleeding stopped. Under the torturous ordeal the thin frame of the boy contorted and strained, but not a syllable escaped the white lips into which at last he bit to smother a cry of pain.

"Done. Now the bandages. I'll be easy. That's . . . all . . . right. Better? Here, drink this." Doc poured a soothing draft into a trembling mouth and covered his patient up with a blanket. In ten minutes the Spartan boy was asleep. Beside the cot lay a pile of dust-colored wearing apparel. On the left arm of the coat, stitched to the khaki, were five "honor stripes." They explained everything.

Shortly thereafter the mother arrived from a neighboring camp and found her sleeping son out of danger. She asked Doc for his bill.

"Madam, there is no fee," said he, wiping his instruments. "All of us boy scouts serve each other in sickness and in health free of charge."

* * *

The sequel to this story is that the kid who dropped the ferry fee into Sim Ford's pocket and the boy scout who lay wounded on the cot were one and the same. A gentleman and a hero.

Salutations to Baden-Powell and Dan Beard!

IV

THE WEIRD TALE OF THE "MAN WITH THE LYING EYE"

ONCE upon a time there lived in the County of Douglas, State of Nevada, an honest German farmer who had bought for himself several hundred acres of sagebrush land upon which he was prepared to settle down for the rest of his life. He rounded up a score of Piute Indians at one dollar a day to clear the scrub away with grub hoes and prepare it for the plow. Richer soil does not exist anywhere in the Union; and once cleared and planted, wealth awaits its conqueror. The Piute Indian, however, is not so easy to master. He toils not, neither does he spin; and so at the end of an experimental month with the red man as a farm hand the honest Teutonic agriculturist rode into town, tied his horse in front of the Magnolia saloon and after five or six drinks hand high fell to complaining.

Lyman Frisbie, the bartender, distinguished as the only man in the county who possessed a glass eye, listened attentively at first, as becomes a servitor to cash customers, and then spoke his mind:

THE "MAN WITH THE LYING EYE"

"You are right, Herman; Piutes are bums. They are sure enough sleepers. I could have told you that. What you need is a foreman who can put the fear of the devil into them. And that's me." Mr. Frisbie fixed his one good dull eye and his one bad glass eye on the farmer leaning across the bar.

"You can do someding mit 'em? Ya," answered the doubting Herman. "How much you charge, Herr Frisbie, come boss my ranch? Speak it."

"I can't see my way clear to take over the control of your place," said Mr. Frisbie in a confidential tone of voice, "but for a little matter of one hundred dollars in United States gold coin I will guarantee to make twenty Piute slob grub ten acres of sagebrush a day for ten days, which is a matter of one hundred acres—and no questions asked."

"Ven you begin, Mr. Frisbie? I took dot proposition!" shouted Herman, slapping his hand on the wet bar.

"Eight o'clock to-morrow. You have twenty strong bucks ready and I'll be there in the cool of the morning. Just tell 'em I'm the boss and leave the rest to me. I'll make a vacation of this job."

Promptly on time Mr. Frisbie arrived in a buckboard, accompanied by his critical glass eye. He was presented formally to the Piutes as the new

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pain in their necks. Beckoning the toilers to grab the implements of torture and fall in behind, Lyman led the little company off to the uncleared acres until he arrived at a pine stump sawed off level and standing about five feet high. This he mounted and requested the red men to gather round and "hear something," as follows, to wit:

"Listen, Injun man; paleface know everything, all same big chief Washington. White man want Injun man grubbum sagebrush so farmer ketchum hay, ketchum wheat, ketchum corn. Injun man no foolum paleface. Me know everything, hear everything, see everything. Me big chief, big boss. Heap smart, plenty ear, plenty eye. You watchum me. I watchum you."

With this lucid burst of oratory Mr. Frisbie, the talented bartender of the Magnolia saloon, began his vacation by stepping down from the pine stump and removing his glass right eye from its socket. Between his thumb and forefinger he held the glistening object aloft and in a slow but impressive voice announced to the terrified Piutes this self-evident truth:

"Me leavum eye here to watch Injun man. You ketchum grub hoe and go work damn quick."

With that Mr. Frisbie turned on his heel, strolled over to the willow grove on the river bank and promptly went to sleep, his wise head pillowed among the wild flowers. Twenty terrified redskins, glancing backward at the gleaming and all-

THE "MAN WITH THE LYING EYE"

seeing glass eye of the omnipotent paleface, sailed into the sagebrush, bent on a campaign of extermination. Under the broiling midsummer sun they opened up their hermetically sealed pores and dripped with honest sweat.

Strengthened by repose, the ex-bartender of the Magnolia arose from the lush grass and returned at high noon to his watchful glass eye, where he summoned his wards with a series of war whoops.

"Injun man go catchum grub," said he in guttural tones, returning the optical masterpiece to its socket. And so to luncheon. He knocked them off again at 5 for the day, and took his eye to bed with him, not forgetting to put in a call for all hands on the morrow at the old pine stump.

It seemed to the delighted German farmer that Mr. Frisbie had solved for all time the problem of making the indolent Piute do a full day's work. At all events, the land began to clear of the scrub and the future looked rosy. In the meantime Lyman Frisbie put in a supply of first-class sleep to the murmur of a friendly river.

On the afternoon of the fifth day the farmer stepped out on his veranda and swept his eyes over the partly cleared land. All movement had ceased. There was not a toiler in sight and the hot sun beat down on a scene of deathlike inaction. Something had gone wrong with the Frisbie System of Manual Labor. Herman made a cautious detour around the fields and found Mr. Frisbie

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snoring the afternoon away, his remaining good eye closed in peaceful slumber.

“Vat is der matter mit der Indians?” he asked, rousing the sleeping slave driver, to whom he imparted the startling news of their disappearance. Mr. Frisbie didn’t know, but would have a look. With his employer trailing in his footsteps he crept to the top of an elevation rising from the river bottom and scanned the quiet scene. Scattered over the field in the shadow of the brush piles lay the completely exhausted persons of twenty Piutes snoozing their heads off. The only suggestion of life occurred when a buck lifted a sinewy brown arm and brushed away a swarm of flies. Otherwise all was still.

Mr. Frisbie, reverting to the vernacular of the pub, began to swear in a rich and fluent manner, making combinations of words and phrases that really had merit. No glossary was necessary, however. He spoke a universal tongue and addressed himself to the whole world. In the midst of the oration he turned to the lone pine stump. A sudden palsy halted his flood of speech, while his solitary natural eye almost popped out into space. What he saw was not the artificial orb that had made vassals of the noble Piute, but a rusty tomato can crowning the spot like a diadem.

Under the discarded tin container, sightless and a prisoner, reposed Mr. Lyman Frisbie’s once terrible but now useless glass eye, while those who

THE "MAN WITH THE LYING EYE"

had writhed under the torture of its diabolical penetration were afield in dreamland.

At the base of the stump, flat on his back, reposed the intrepid buck Indian who had sneaked up on the "all-seeing" ornament and snuffed out its vision. Uttering a loud agonizing cry of rage Mr. Frisbie struck the can violently away and with it went the glass eye, shattering to fragments. It fell in a glittering shower, coming at last to rest in the unfriendly dust for all men to see.

* * *

Twenty Piutes, the sleep still in their eyes, gathered about the pine pedestal and in cold scorn witnessed the spectacle of Mr. Frisbie's shame and degradation. To this day he is always referred to by the Piutes as "the man with the lying eye." The legend will live forever.

V

HOW MUSSOLINI LOOKS, TALKS AND ACTS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

ROME, September 13, 1926.

ABOUT 9 o'clock on the morning of September 11 an untrained bomb-thrower missed Mussolini twice. He expressed regret at his bad marksmanship, but was not allowed to try again.

* * *

Promptly at 6 o'clock on the afternoon of the same day Mussolini, from his balcony at the Chigi Palace, delivered an impassioned address to the populace of Rome on the subject of assassination. The particular spot the Premier selected from which to make his third speech on the matter in hand had a commanding view of the Piazza Colonna, from the center of which rises one of the two remaining early Roman columns in all Italy. It is a sacred spot in Italian eyes, and a perfect photographic light falls upon the balcony, which faces the south. The cameras of the plain populi clicked all over the square while the larger, better equipped instruments of the official photographers fired a balcony salvo. Premier Mussolini is not

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camera shy. His speech, a perfect specimen of forensic magnificence, deliberation, gesture and culmination, consumed eleven minutes in delivery, ample time being allowed for applause. Situated as I was within a hundred feet of the speaker, I heard every syllable, but owing to my limited public school connections in America much of it got away from me.

Immediately upon stepping into view he makes the Fascist salute, which consists of lifting the right arm, the palm out, precisely as a traffic cop in New York spreads hesitation among the rich and poor alike. His head is held high and the massive chin forward, protruding and animated. From a position below one sees the mobile jaw and catches occasionally the flash of his black eyes. At times he leans over the rail and thunders with his full battery. Then he is all eyes. The whole pose is imperial, but his voice is the voice of the people and there is a splendid ring of sincerity in every utterance. Whatever gestures he makes are with the right hand and arm, with which he hammers downward, sweeps away, thrusts forward, consigns to oblivion and commands to halt. His hand is an expressive instrument, open, closed or gesticulating with one or all fingers. He clutches, discards or selects the grapes of rhetoric or squeezes the whole bunch dry. At the end of a period, when the applause justifies the necessary time, he steps back, takes

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an unctuous dry hand wash and flicks the imaginary moisture into space. This is his only gesture of gratification.

The finale of his speech starts with the right linen cuff beginning to creep from his coat sleeve. As the activity of the arm develops and the vehemence of his speech increases the cuff acquires a piston rod movement. When the final point is made, the concluding spike driven, the right arm of Premier Mussolini, whose father was a blacksmith, shoots full length from the black broadcloth sleeve and the speech is ended. While acknowledging the applause, always deafening, the great Fascist fights with his cuff to get it back whence it came. The retinue grouped about take a few acknowledgments for their own account, make an opening for the most talked-about man in Europe, and recede with him behind the shutters that close on the balcony.

* * *

On September 13, at 11 o'clock, I had an interview with Mussolini in his private office. Here I found another and altogether different personality. He is vital, but always under full control save when reference is made to Italy's place in the sun. Normally he has the affable manner of all successful statesmen. His head is oval, the forehead high, broad and finely modeled. The eyes are large, dark and brilliant, the pupil en-

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larging and contracting as he talks. The nose, wide at the nostrils, is slightly Roman and the smooth upper lip long. His mouth is large and flexible. He speaks with the precision of one who intends to be understood.

The Mussolini jaw is a masterpiece of its kind. Starting beneath the lobes of his ears, which lie close to the head, it swings downward and outward; a monumental creation. The space under the chin is wide and the flesh firm. There is the solidarity of muscular power about the lower half of the face. All his imagination and ideality is disclosed in his eyes and forehead. The teeth are white, regular and apparently sound. When he shakes hands it is with his whole body, inherited from the sturdy blacksmith who was his sire. At a guess he weighs 170 pounds and is about five feet eight inches in height. There is nothing of the Goth inheritance in his complexion. He is dark and swarthy, the hair thinning over both temples and on the back of the dome. His stride is military and his manner alert.

Mussolini, however, has nothing of what is known in America as the "poker face." Every mood he feels is spread upon his features in advance. He has a trick of addressing his interpreter, Marquis Paulucci, in an Italian aside, low and swift running, from which he melts into broken English that is quite understandable and rich with epigrams. Excitement, regret, disdain,

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irritation and self-satisfaction all record themselves prior to the spoken word.

* * *

One cannot help being impressed with his ingenuousness. His is the air of a healthy man who is entranced with the drama that is fomenting around him. His manner says: "What do you think about this life I am living? Is it not amazing: these upheavals, these times, these dangers, these elements always in motion? Behold Italy!"

After a session in his presence one recalls the lines of John Ruskin from *Ariadne Florentina*:

. . . Then in the thirteenth century men woke as if they heard an alarm through the whole vault of heaven, and true human hope begins again; and the whole cradle of life is the Val d'Arno.

And it so happens that it was in the Valley of the Arno, Florence, to be exact, that the Fascist movement, which lifted Mussolini to the supreme heights among the figures of Europe, had its birth.

* * *

Since that unheralded dawning the blacksmith's son has not paused a single hour to cultivate the flower of dejection.

VI

I COME UPON A GENIUS IN DISTRESS AND RUB THE LAMP

THIS story, which had its beginning as far back as 1887, is curious in that it goes to show the permanency of bonds once formed. Two individuals meet under the most trivial circumstances, touch and separate. Time flies; a long gap lies between. Suddenly, with no thought either of the other, they meet again—apparently in the nick of time; the roads of destiny converge three thousand miles from the spot of the first event.

* * *

I was feeding a job press in the basement of a print shop at the corner of Temple and Olive streets in Los Angeles. On the ground floor a young artist had taken a studio and was reaching out for commissions. The walls of his atelier were hung with pictures of stage coaches and studies of horses painted in oil. He also modeled in clay and chiseled a bit in stone. During the lunch hour I visited his studio, commiserated with him on the lack of artistic appreciation on the

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Pacific coast and struck up a friendly acquaintance. He confided that his ambition was to excel in sculpture and that he painted only to get the sinews with which to go on. The chisel, not the brush, was his link with the future.

One noon I entered his studio and found him in high spirits. He was rigging a large canvas on his easel and making great preparations for something important.

"I am to do a life-sized seated portrait of General John C. Frémont in military regalia," he announced. "Mrs. Frémont is bringing him this afternoon for the first sitting. Come to-morrow at lunch time and I'll have the figure roughed up. He has a strong face and I shall have no difficulty getting a good likeness."

I saw the picture grow from the first touch of the brush. Frémont came always to the artist on the arm of his wife, who seemed to be the one person he desired to please. She brought with her a military coat adorned with gold and tasseled epaulets, a garment the great Indian fighter wore with dignity. His lady helped him into it with studious attention to all the details.

Under the deft brush of the artist the portrait began to assume true grandeur until the end, and after Mrs. Frémont had seen to it that the epaulets lacked nothing of their golden luster, it was completed and taken away to be exhibited in an art gallery on Spring street. I called after the work

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was properly installed for the inspection of the public and did no little boasting about my acquaintance with the artist. With the money realized from that effort he packed up his paraphernalia and disappeared, passing, as I supposed at the time, out of my life forever. I believed him to be a great man, but I couldn't prove it; so he drifted from my memory.

Seventeen years afterward, I met John O'Hara Cosgrave, at that time editor of *Everybody's Magazine*. We stopped and talked of California, from which state both of us hailed.

"If you have nothing on for to-night," he said, "why don't you come with me? James Stillman has bought for \$15,000 a bronze group from a sculptor friend of mine and will present it to the Metropolitan Museum. The artist is to unveil the work in his studio at 9 o'clock."

"Something allegorical?" I asked.

"Yes; the Mares of Diomedes. Nine horses and a nude male rider mounted on one of the plunging steeds. Very fine."

I was on hand with Cosgrave at the appointed hour and found the studio filled with the leading artists and art patrons of New York. There was some delay in my presentation, so I did not meet the sculptor until a few moments before the unveiling. However, the moment he held out his hand I recognized the penniless painter of John C. Frémont's portrait. Under the spell of his great

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triumph he was too occupied to recognize me, and so I made the remark: "We have met before."

In the crush we were separated. Shortly thereafter the ceremony of the unveiling was announced. I shall never forget him as he stood beside his masterpiece, a massive, shapeless thing swathed in white sheeting, that with his own hand he was about to reveal to the world. He had changed but little, though now his was the demeanor of triumph. The clay had responded to his fingers, the plastic art was conquered and his work would survive the ages.

Slowly he began to speak. With commendable reserve and in simple phrases he told what this moment meant to him. But self-consciousness, an influence more terrifying than he had ever coped with before, was gradually overpowering him. His speech failed; the hand that with one gesture could have stripped the veil from his beloved horses was palsied. Genius seemed dumb and inert.

Of all the people present in that crowded room I knew him best; the one alone who could define his genesis. In two steps I was beside him and took the cord from his hand. As briefly as possible I told the story of his youthful struggles, after which with a feeling of pride equal with his I unveiled the nine maddened mares and the nude rider and let them plunge into view out of the realm of mythology. They leaped from the very

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clouds as though destined to gallop through the world forever.

"I remember you now," was his first utterance when he found his voice, but I had lost mine.

I remained at the studio long after all the others had gone. The money he had received for the group—it can be seen on the first floor of the Metropolitan in Central Park—hardly paid for the time spent. He had won fame, but at what cost? He must go on.

"Something will happen to relieve the pressure," I ventured. "The unexpected." We separated in gloom.

Three days later I received the following telegram from my brother in Carson, Nevada:

LEGISLATURE HAS APPROPRIATED \$25,000 TO
ERECT A STATUE OF JOHN W. MACKAY FOR THE
SCHOOL OF MINES IN RENO. DO YOU KNOW A
GOOD SCULPTOR? SAM DAVIS

To which I replied:

COME ON WITH YOUR APPROPRIATION. I KNOW
THE BEST SCULPTOR IN AMERICA, GUTZON BOR-
GLUM. BOB

* * *

My friend, who had painted John C. Frémont in 1887 and made "The Mares of Diomedes" in 1904, got the commission to fashion the statue of

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the great Comstocker that, in enduring bronze, with a pick in one hand and a chunk of quartz in the other, now stands gazing across the hills toward Virginia City, where he found Golconda.

Borglum is to-day a world figure in the realm of art.

VII

REMOVING AN ELEPHANT FROM JURISDICTION OF THE COURT

I AM in receipt of a letter from Carson, Nevada, asking if I recall the time a small circus went on the rocks in that historic state capital and my brother Sam connived with the boss animal man to get an Asiatic elephant over the county line and out of the grasp of the law, which demanded four tons of flesh. I most certainly do remember, and here is the tale in all its thrilling particulars:

Much valuable space can be saved by eliminating the petty details that brought the one-ringer to destruction. Enough to know that it collapsed as a money-making proposition, and an avalanche of liens from hotel keepers, farmers, water purveyors and livery stables came down like a pack of wolves on the fold. An advertising claim of the Carson *Appeal*, which my kinsman conducted, was satisfied by transfer of a Shetland pony and a ring-tailed monkey, both of which behaved splendidly until the former lost popularity by kicking a baby carriage into smithereens and boosting the unweaned occupant across the street

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into a crate of lettuce. The damage to the kid was negligible.

The monkey closed his career by falling from the shafting of the pressroom into a barrel of printer's ink. The hapless rascal was fished out and given a bath in benzine, an operation that not only removed the ink but all Jocko's hair as well. His death, due to pneumonia, was announced in black borders on the front page.

In the meantime a mangy lion, two tigers and a laughing hyena that had been grabbed by a hotel keeper consumed enough dressed beef to bust the popular Boniface, who finally informed the circus people that his claims would be canceled if the jungle king and his associates were reclaimed and escorted out of the state. The horses, camels, anteaters and one zebra broke parole and went into the friendly desert, where they were rounded up, driven into Reno and thence shipped to San Francisco.

Finally the menagerie, which had won the everlasting hatred of the several claimants, shrunk to the elephant, the only valuable animal in the entire layout. The creditors united on that one asset in the hope of realizing all claims. The ponderous glutton went touring with his keeper from barn to barn, consuming bale after bale of eight-dollar hay. He cleaned out all the feed and grain stores in Carson and was in a fair way to bring on a famine. It is one thing to levy on an elephant, but an-

AN ELEPHANT

other to get possession of him. The various creditors undertook to lodge the beast in woodsheds and outbuildings, most of which he wrecked. The situation was becoming desperate, until at last the very wild animal man appealed to my brother for a suggestion as to how he could escape from Ormsby county with his last card.

“Well,” said the editor, “I can give you a hint.”

“Let her go.”

“I have a farm two miles north of town. You will find there a small shed half full of hay near the barn. Bring your elephant out to-morrow morning, ostensibly to get feed; put him in the shed and saunter around the farm.”

“What’ll that get me?” asked the circus man impatiently.

“I’m coming to that. When everything is quiet, climb the north fence which marks the county line, call to your fat friend and let him do the rest. If he strolls through the fence, out of the jurisdiction of one county and into another, it’s his fault and not yours.”

“Mister,” said the circus man, “you are a deep thinker and ought to be running a wagon show. Put her there. I’ll be out to your place at day-break.”

The next morning as the farm hand was coming out of the hay an ambitious stranger could be seen prodding an elephant swaying leisurely along the road. The first indication that some-

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thing significant had occurred was when the hired man tore out of the barn and began to bang on the kitchen door.

The editor opened an upper window and inquired as to the cause of the commotion.

"What the hell is this coming up the road?" asked the roustabout.

"That's the elephant to plow with."

"Who plows with? Not me."

"I thought you claimed to be a practical farmer when I hired you. Go back to the barn and get the elephant harness or quit the job. I've got no time to waste on you."

"Wait a minute. I plow with horses or nothing. You can throw down a week's wages and I'll light out of here. Wait'll I get my clothes."

Further dialogue was interrupted by the arrival of the elephant and his keeper. The hired man made a dash for the hayloft, pulling the ladder up after him. The two conspirators then had a good laugh over the terror of the farm hand and the elephant was escorted into the hay shed, the sliding doors of which were closed upon him. Not even the offer of a week's wages could induce the hired man to come down from his retreat.

"I'm off the pay roll where I am and I'm off the place when that elephant goes. And you needn't mind about me not missin' breakfast, because I ain't got no appetite."

The horses and cows on the premises began to

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snort and grow restless. All the barnyard fowl set up a great racket and hunted cover. A bulldog that had an unbroken record for ferocity went yelping into the cellar and tried to gnaw a tunnel into a mound of loose potatoes and last year's roots. Such was the consternation that had sprung up on that otherwise quiet estate that the circus man, after a cup of coffee, decided to make his getaway more or less pronto.

He climbed the north fence, hurried through the sagebrush for a hundred yards or so, halted, lifted his head and let out a long, weird cry. Evidently that call of the wild did not fall upon deaf ears, because the next instant the shed containing the elephant began to rock on its foundations. The two doors fell off their hinges, the ridge pole cracked and the whole structure progressed slowly toward the circus man howling his invitation to the monster. Loose hay protruded through the gaps like straw from a gigantic mattress. Ponderously the mass of boards and shingles progressed, the entire building falling to pieces in transit. Presently the waving trunk of the tenant appeared and a stentorian trumpet blast shook the very hills. With that devastating call the last fragments of the hay shed fell from the colossal shoulders and a four ton elephant, freed of all encumbrance, crashed out of Ormsby county into Washoe and became at last unfettered of law.

VIII

THE MOST PATHETIC STORY EVER HEARD FROM HUMAN LIPS

THIS story came to me from a minister of the gospel. For some time I have pondered as to how it should be written, just how much should be disclosed—or whether it should be written at all. In the contemplation of these details the significance of the narrative has been borne in upon me to such an extent that I feel it obligatory to set it down in cold type, to reproduce the tale, as nearly as possible in the same form that it came to me from the narrator. The whole tragic monologue, as it fell upon my ears, follows in full:

* * *

A few years ago [said the minister] before the people of this country became wrought up over the question of prohibition I was conducting in a Southern state a small parish among the lowly folk of a sparsely settled district, where I came in contact with much distress born of poverty and ignorance. Some of my parishioners manufactured and sold moonshine or made it for their own

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use. That illicit enterprise had been going on for a century, with all its unhappy consequences, and was not within my control. It was there to stay; part of the problem of life.

One night, very late, I was summoned from my bed by a knock at my front door. It was too dark for me to distinguish the visitor, so I asked him in. He was probably sixty years of age, ill kempt, furtive and with a haunting fear in his face.

"I am in trouble," he said, "and I need help, the kind that only a man of God can give. Will you come with me to my house up in the laurel? I've a horse and a rig outside. You'll have to take my word for it that something serious has happened." His speech was that of an educated man.

I dressed hurriedly and drove off with him into the dark forest. While he was not actually intoxicated he exuded a vapor of alcohol that was stifling. He was disinclined to give me particulars concerning the mission. "I want you to see for yourself," was his response to my queries. At intervals he moaned like a sick animal and pleaded continually with the horse to get along. After half an hour of lurching over a bad country road we turned into a hidden course and halted in front of a miserable shack that nestled against the mountainside like some sleeping monster. A single candle burned on a table.

"Have you brought the minister?" The voice

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was unmistakably feminine, but thick and maudlin. Two boys, about fourteen and fifteen, appeared in the doorway. They were garbed in tattered blue denim, and the dull leer of the drinker was in their eyes. The elder of the pair picked up the candle as I entered on the heels of the father and held it aloft. It was as though some stage director had lighted up one of Gorky's terrible dramas of delirium. The place was filthy and the cast of four reeked with the stale effluvium of moonshine.

The incongruity of the scene lay in the fact that all four of them were smiling, as though with false gayety. Even the father, steeped in remorse while we drove through the timber, had become mildly buoyant. I turned to him for an explanation. "Come into the bedroom, parson," said he, taking the candle from his son, and leading the way. "You will see something wonderful." With the others I stepped into the adjoining room.

Stretched upon a low pallet was the lifeless body of a young woman not more than twenty years of age. A mass of brown hair rolled up from the white forehead and fell back on the stained pillow. Her shapely hands were crossed on her breast and the exquisite profile lighted from above was the acme of angelic beauty. It was the most radiant face I have ever beheld. Like a calla lily in the marl or a lotus blossom in the slime the girl had come to the fruition of her beauty and her bloom; daughter and sister to

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that maudlin company grouped about her bier.

She had died of pneumonia that evening and her body was placed where it lay. Not a tear had been shed, not a syllable of remorse uttered. About her exquisite clay the living moved and gave no sign of grief. The father and mother looked at each other with mutual approval. The tousled brothers shared the general satisfaction. Would I perform the burial service? Yes; to-morrow. I would bring the coroner, arrange the usual formalities and then lay her in the earth. Their tearless joy baffled me. Well past midnight I departed from that house of mystery and walked back to my parsonage in the imponderable dark, wondering what the solution could be.

The next morning I attended to the official duties, and at noon, with no witnesses save the family, performed the burial service in a laurel grove. During the whole thirty years of my ministering no other interment compared with that amazing ritual on the hillside. The boys had slicked their hair and from somewhere secured clothing not all of rags. They stood at the grave dug by their own hands and viewed the ceremony like strangers to the dead. The father, lifted for the moment from the despondency into which he had been drifting for half of his existence, displayed a certain pride and satisfaction at the culmination of his efforts to secure a Christian burial. Beside him, complacently smiling, stood

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the woman who had borne the girl. But for the thud of clay and the last words of the service one would have thought that the cornerstone of a homestead was being laid.

I returned with the family to the house. On the kitchen table was a bucket containing enough moonshine to float a dipper. Each of the boys took a drink and passed the ladle to the mother, who took two short drinks and handed it on to the father. Just as he was about to lift it to his lips I asked him why the family was so apparently joyful. He finished his draft of moonshine and then replied:

“The girl you just buried never wet her lips with alcohol. She was as fine a creature as ever drew the breath of life. She grew up in an atmosphere of awful thirst; she had nothing to live for, nothing to look forward to. But she had a great spirit in her, a spirit that all her forbears lacked. We failed her, but she remained with us. You ask why we are not mourning her death, why there is no grief in the house. I’ll tell you. She has escaped. She was the first member of my family to die during the last sixty years who does not sleep in a drunkard’s grave.”

IX

WHAT ZANGWILL RECEIVED FOR WRITING NEW YORK'S GHETTO

THE death of Israel Zangwill in Sussex, England, on August 1, 1926, brings back to mind the occasion of my first meeting with the distinguished Zionist in New York twenty-four years ago. Having already gilded his pen on *Six Persons*, *Children of the Ghetto*, *Merely Mary Ann* and *Jinny the Carrier*, he reached our shores flying the banner of eminence, to be received by a cordial populace.

While here he made his headquarters at the residence of a friend in the East Seventies. After a bombardment at the hands of the American reporters the visitor asked for a brief respite for purposes of reflection. It was during this preliminary lull that Rudolph Block, then editor of the Sunday editorial section of the *New York Journal*, conceived the brilliant idea that the illustrious Hebrew, rejuvenated by a period of repose, would be in a receptive state of mind to contribute to the daily press something from his brilliant pen.

"Go up and see Zangwill," said he to me, one of

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his underlings, "and ask him to write for the *Journal* a special article about two thousand words in length on New York's Ghetto. His rates are high; pay him what he asks, provided he delivers the copy to-morrow before noon. Here's an order on the business office for five hundred dollars. If he declines, it's your fault. Now hustle."

I broke in on the quiet of Mr. Zangwill about 11 in the morning. The servant told me that I would find him in the second-floor drawing-room. He was seated with his back to the door as I entered. A tea tray was before him and he was dismembering a triangle of toast.

"'E will 'ave 'is Lipton," I thought. While waiting for some recognition I stood a moment and studied the thin, round-shouldered figure bent over the repast. He seemed quite frail. Suddenly he turned slightly to the left, and revealed his remarkable nose, such as one sees on the portraits of Savonarola the Florentine. Through the left glass of his gold mounted *pince-nez* I caught the glitter of one eye.

"What do you wish?" he inquired magnetizing me with a sweep of his arm, which I followed to a chair in front of him. "I am having breakfast. Will you take a cigarette?"

I explained my mission between puffs of a mixture that contained pungent perique and Egyptian tobacco. Throughout my remarks I could not take my eyes from his remarkable features.

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Although he was not yet in his forties, the whole countenance was heavy with years. The large nostrils that dilated as he spoke, the massive lips, the wide mouth drooping at the corners, the remarkable, penetrating eyes, the length of the head from crown to chin and the full lobes of his ears all contributed to the suggestion that Zangwill had matured in every feature. He was dressed entirely in black, even to the string tie bowed at the high collar. His hands were large and the color scheme of his flesh cold olive. While I spoke he moved pieces of the tea service about noiselessly. I concluded with the suggestion that it would be a pleasure to call a hansom and drive him through New York's Ghetto, if we could come to terms.

"Two thousand words are not much," said he, removing his glasses and tapping his fingers one at a time—"but I am a journeyman writer and quite naturally expect to be compensated. I know nothing of the rates paid by the American newspapers. A trip to the Ghetto is not necessary; I have already been there. Moreover, to paraphrase one of your popular songs, 'all ghettos look alike to me.' If you are really in a great hurry I can have the manuscript ready for you at 4 this afternoon." He replaced his glasses on the marvelous aquiline nose, leaned forward and said softly, "If we can come to terms."

"I am authorized to accept any proposition you

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will be kind enough to make," I replied. "It is impossible that we can vary as to the value of intellectual performance."

"Three hundred dollars," answered the Zionist, offering me a second cigarette. "And the manuscript at 4 o'clock."

"That is precisely the sum we expected to pay. And in cash." I withdrew three neatly folded one hundred dollar bills from the inner wall of my upper vest pocket and passed them to the bewildered dramatist with a formal bow.

"This is amazing!" he exclaimed, gazing at the crisp yellowbacks in the palm of his hand. "You come to me with a proposition to write; you ask my terms; I state them and you present me with the exact amount named. You encourage applause."

He walked up and down the room voicing his astonishment.

"What I am unable to fathom," he went on, "is the perfect coördination. How did you know that I would say three hundred? Suppose, for example, I had said two hundred dollars? What then?"

"We have nothing to conceal. Under those circumstances I would have removed from the outer wall of the same vest pocket these two gold certificates," which I forthwith produced, "and offer them with the same courteous genuflection."

Zangwill sank into the nearest chair and made

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a remark that seemed to smack of the Talmud.

"And had you said five hundred I would have withdrawn the lead pencil dividing the two and the three and handed you the entire amount," I concluded, dropping on the settee.

The silence was oppressive, broken finally by the query from Zangwill: "Who is the inventor of this amazing system?"

"Mr. Rudolph Block."

"Ah! One of us. And you are—"

"A New Englander."

"Yankee," murmured the dramatist. "A fine pair of buccaneers with which to confront an innocent."

"And we have come to terms?"

"Absolutely," answered Zangwill, a ripple of laughter mingling with his words. "A bargain's a bargain. The manuscript will be ready at 4 o'clock. My compliments to Mr. Block."

* * *

Several years afterward when Zangwill came to New York to assist in the production of "The Melting Pot," I met him in the lobby of the Amsterdam Theater.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, recognizing me instantly, "Davis! My young Hebrew friend of New York's Ghetto."

Not even Al Woods, standing close by, could account for the laughter that followed.

X

MY EXPERIENCE WITH HYPNOTISM AND PHRENOLOGY

AS far back as 1888 Los Angeles had a real estate boom. Between Redondo Beach and the City of the Angels was a district known as the Centanella-Inglewood tract. On a weekly paper called the *Inglewood Star* I was employed as a compositor and reporter.

One day there turned up a certain Professor Beverley Wellington, who dealt in phrenology, hypnotism and psychic manifestations. He was also known as the Manchester Marvel, hailing from England. He bought some space in the *Star*, got some dodgers and paid a small advance on the Town Hall. He tried to pay his bills with psychic currency and found himself with his back against the wall.

The following day he skipped out, leaving with the boarding house keeper his phrenology plant, which consisted of five linen charts, the heads of Herbert Spencer, George Washington and Mary Pritchard, the English murderess; a portrait of Charles Parnell and a handsome three-color illus-

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tration showing the crowned heads of Europe. This rare collection ultimately fell into my possession and in a short time formed the nucleus of a wild ambition to appear in public as a phrenology shark.

I secured some books on the subject and read up. Within a short time thereafter the *Star* faded out and I left Inglewood with my charts in search of other occupation. Within a week I found myself in a small California town which for obvious reasons I decline to advertise.

I made a deal with the editor of the local paper to set type free for one week if he would stake me to the necessary printing and publicity to give a lecture on phrenology and hypnotism. Done! My announcement read:

BEVERLEY WELLINGTON, THE BOY HYPNOTIST
AND PHRENOLOGICAL WONDER, WILL LECTURE
TO-NIGHT AT MASONIC HALL.
ADMISSION 50 CENTS

In the meantime I had made a surreptitious connection with a barber named Leftwich to submit to my hypnotic powers for the sum of five dollars, to be paid after the lecture. He confided in me the fact that his left shoulder was slightly paralyzed and that penetrating its flesh with a pin caused him no pain. He was made for me. The balance of the program was rehearsed in secret.

The gifted barber further informed me that he

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knew a yodeler who would add much to the evening's entertainment for two dollars. I hired him also.

The hall was pretty well filled when I stepped out on the platform backed by Herbert Spencer, George Washington, Parnell, Mary Pritchard and the crowned heads. My yodeler was in the front row ready if called upon. Leftwich sat on the aisle well back so that his entrance when volunteers were called for would be spectacular.

That part of the program dealing with phrenology was simple indeed. I mated young couples merely on the shape of their heads, impressed upon a hack driver that he had the dome of a railroad president, convinced a dentist of his fitness to sit in the Senate, made a night clerk in the local hotel understand that with a few trials he could make a better speech than Robert G. Ingersoll. One man who had a head shaped like Abraham Lincoln offered me ten dollars for a private sitting in the presence of his wife. Up to that point I was a big hit. I closed the phrenology by feeling a few female skulls, finding at last a brow equal to that of Cleopatra.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen," I said in a very serious vein, "while I am preparing myself for the great hypnotic manifestation, I will ask Mr. Otto Springmeyer, the Swiss Yodeler, to entertain you with his art."

Otto killed five minutes with his acrobatic larynx

HYPNOTISM AND PHRENOLOGY Camp Craft, S. C.

and sat down amid deafening applause. I continued:

“If there is one among you who cares to submit himself wholly to my will you shall witness a marvelous demonstration of my mysterious power over the mind of another. I prefer a strong mentality. Who wishes—”

Leftwich got out of his seat and lumbered forward with a derby hat in his hand. I seated him near the front of the platform and in a few passes put him to sleep with his eyes wide open, transfixed by my gaze.

“Now, sir, you are helpless. My will is your will.” I handed him a lead pencil and a bill fold. “Here is a comb and brush. Fix your hair.” He combed and brushed. “You are holding a lighted match in your hand. It will burn you.” He threw the pencil on the floor. “Stamp it out!” He jumped on the imaginary flame.

“I now offer you an apple. Eat it.” With that I handed him a large Spanish onion from my coat pocket. He consumed it with apparent relish. I picked up the hat leaning against the chair. “This is a football. I want you to kick it into the audience.” The crackling of a smacked derby filled the hall. The hypnotized Leftwich drove the kelly down the aisle near where he had been seated. A spectator picked up the mutilated remains.

“I have deadened all sense of pain.” I then

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proceeded to stick needles into the left shoulder of the limited paralytic. Not a peep from him. I turned to the audience for applause. Up the aisle, bearing the mangled derby, strode a total stranger. Without any preliminaries whatever he stepped up on the low platform, shouting:

"That was my hat you kicked," and hit the human pincushion a resounding punch between the tranced eyes. A riot ensued.

"Start yodeling," I shouted to Mr. Springmeyer, who responded with a flood of caterwaulings. He was felled by a leather cushion. Not even the De Reszke brothers could have pacified that uprising. In one minute the air was full of chairs and Masonic bric-à-brac. Each man for himself; women and children second.

Bumps never before catalogued in phrenological research appeared almost instantly in different parts of the house. Crowned heads were everywhere. I got out and back to my hotel at midnight, followed by a party whose breath smelled of Spanish onions and who wanted five dollars in cash—that night.

"How did you come to pick up the wrong derby?" I asked.

"Because," replied the lunatic, "we didn't rehearse that part of the show. And don't forget two dollars for the yodeler."

* * *

HYPNOTISM AND PHRENOLOGY

Beverley Wellington, the Boy Hypnotist and Phrenological Wonder, presents his compliments to the Masonic Lodge in the village of Blank and begs that the members will kindly accept five phrenological charts as testimonials of his esteem.

XI

A WINTER NIGHT'S ADVENTURE WITH THE SOUL OF HENRY GEORGE

STEADY readers of my books, if there be such, may have observed that in previous references to my father I pointed out his catholicity with all sorts and conditions of men. He was an omnivorous reader, a student of political conditions, a subscriber to most of the magazines that pretended to present the best thought of the period, and a staunch advocate of the single-tax theory. In the remote fastnesses of the Sierra Nevadas, where he conducted his Episcopalian parish, he found time to develop a very considerable correspondence with men of the outside world. Among them was Henry George, whose tax doctrines had begun to attract the attention of economists. The friendship that grew up between them resulted in the great expounder of the dangers of the "unearned increment" paying a visit to my sire at Carson, Nevada, in the early eighties.

Mr. George arrived at our house in a blinding snowstorm. My father, who had met him at the train, was carrying the guest's carpetbag, while the single taxpayer clung tightly to a small leather

SOUL OF HENRY GEORGE

grip in which was concealed, as I learned later, his whole existence.

I valeted the visitor to the extent of removing his galoshes and his heavy overcoat. To this very day, although forty-five years have elapsed, I can see him standing in front of our parlor stove warming his hands and turning around slowly so that the generous heat could reach his small body. He was about five feet four or five inches in height. Even as a small boy I was overcome at the size and splendor of his head. He wore a close brown beard that gave prominence to the whiteness and height of his forehead, which was like a dome. He spoke very slowly and distinctly, dwelling at length upon the milder climate of San Francisco, from which city he had just come.

I was not aware at the time that one wet and bleak night a few years before, Henry George, in dire poverty, frenzied lest delay should mean death, rushed into the streets of San Francisco and sought the aid of a stranger that his wife, in the pangs of childbirth, might secure the necessary medical aid to bring his second son, Richard George, into the world. Such is the fact, however.

After a nourishing dinner Mr. George was escorted by my father into the study, where behind closed doors evils of taxation and the problems of government were thrashed out far into the night. The next day broke clear and cold with a carpet of ice spread over the city.

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Mr. George had planned to leave that night on the 7:30 train for Reno, there to catch the Overland and proceed East; but the condition of the streets was such that it became necessary to get out the family mustang and the Petaluma cart, which comprised the vehicular plant of the Davis family, in order that the notable visitor could be transported to the depot. When Mr. George and my father, together with the carpetbag, were stowed in the narrow seat, plus the thick overcoats which they wore, there was little room for the grip.

"Bob can bring it to the station," said my parent. "He can take a short cut and meet us there."

"Be careful, my boy," said Henry George passing the grip over reluctantly. "Everything I have in this world is in there."

The two economists drove away, while I hustled over to the railroad track, bent on delivering the goods. Alongside the Virginia and Truckee Railroad right of way ran a creek from one to three feet in depth. The freeze of the night before had thickened the ice, and while hurrying along its banks I caught sight of a slick black stretch that seemed worth at least one experimental slide. I took it on the run, using the black leather bag of Henry George to balance me in flight. But something went wrong; the ice rocked, cracked and then broke through. I struck on one elbow

SOUL OF HENRY GEORGE

and let go of the grip, which came down with a splash into open water, where it sank.

I floundered out of the shallow stream and ran along the bank in terror, searching the running brook in wild confusion. Presently I caught sight of the precious thing bumping along slowly downstream. It moved under the sheet of ice with the deliberation of a funeral. I was sorely tempted to break through, grab the bag, hasten to the train and then slowly freeze to death in expiation. It was growing darker every second and I was at my wits' ends until I discerned a few yards ahead some free water which purled and eddied. I hastened forward and took a position at that point. After a spell that seemed to last all winter the bag pumped into view. I nailed it and ran down the track to the depot, the ice congealing on the saturated bag as I fled onward. I arrived just in time to hand it over to Henry George, who was pacing the platform like a caged panther. I tried to explain, but a chilled heart and frozen lips balked me. "All aboard!" yelled the conductor, and the author of *Progress and Poverty* with a leather-lined cake of ice climbed aboard and went away from Carson for good.

* * *

Fifteen years later during a New York mayoralty campaign I met Henry George coming out of the Tribune Building on Park Row. I pre-

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sented myself as the boy who had brought the frozen grip to the train at the Carson depot on that winter evening. I confessed everything.

"What did the black bag contain?" I asked.

"The revised proofs of a new edition of *Progress and Poverty*, with some added chapters in longhand," he answered in that same deliberate, carefully phrased speech that I had heard years before. "I sat up all night on the train drying out the pages and turning them over one at a time in my drawing-room. I never knew until now how you so completely saturated the contents of that bag. Your explanation is satisfactory. It would have been difficult to replace the material had it eluded your vigilance. I suppose," he said reflectively, "that it was predestined. I wrote the book in poverty. Once I lost part of the manuscript in a basement furnace. And finally it arrived at the river. Famine, fire and flood."

* * *

Within two weeks Henry George, exhausted by his campaign labors, died on the eve of election, his son, Henry George, Jr., taking his place on the ticket.

XII

HOW MY OFFICE BOY ONCE ACCEPTED ME AS AN EQUAL

HIS name was Charley, and he was bashful like a girl. Twisting his hat into a rope, he came to my office in search of a job and blushed furiously when I asked him what he required for wages to make him happy.

“I was thinking about five a week,” he replied with an effort, “but if I got four it would be better than three, which mother says is all I’m worth.”

“I’ll start you at five. If you are not worth that I’ll cut you to four; and when you fall into the three-dollar-a-week class you’re fired.” He received those three announcements like one receiving three punches.

I told him to hang up his hat in the locker and take a seat at the desk against the wall not far from my own. It was made plain to him that his work was under cover and that the less he went out into the street the better we would like him. Nothing was said to Charley about the press-room, so he took it for granted that a little crap shooting with the apprentices below stairs from time to time was not taboo.

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Regardless of his bashfulness in the presence of adults, Charley showed no inclination toward diffidence in the society of other office boys in the building. Fact is, on several occasions it required from two to four pressmen to pull Charley off the person of any basement gamin who tried to gyp him with the wanton dice.

In his capacity of office boy he was without a peer and endeared himself to the entire staff. Physically he seemed to be a small kid, but there was a suggestion of sturdy strength about his movements. During the two years he was with us Charley filled out, and finally reached a state of muscular perfection that enabled him to throw an unwelcome, slightly stewed visitor down two flights of stairs. At the landing Charley collared the gent and dragged him to the corner, turned in a police call and then helped the cops heave the wreck into the wagon. Snappy.

Eventually he conquered his reticence and at fifteen was considerable of a person. His eye was as clear as crystal and his whole being exuded vitality and pep. I made a conscientious effort to turn his mind into the higher channels, but he preferred to sit against the wall and serve.

At this juncture Charley's parents moved to Newark and took our faithful servitor with them. I made generous overtures to keep him in New York but they declined my offers. The boy had no option other than to go with his folks and

MY OFFICE BOY AS AN EQUAL

so we parted, both with a display of honest regret. A week later I received a photograph of the exile. Upon it he had written in a firm juvenile hand:

You will never get another office boy like me. Charley.

True and affectionate words, and from the heart. I took pride in having won his esteem and felt keenly his departure.

That was twenty-five years ago.

* * *

Twelve years later:

A card is brought in to me, upon which is written the single word "Charley." A flash of lightning could not have illuminated the past with more brilliance. "Show him in."

He entered the room as though in doubt about his reception. All the boy in him had vanished; the hand he offered me was as hard as iron. There were lines in his face, but the eyes were still clear and open.

"I'm glad to see you, Charley. What are you doing?"

He grinned and turned his left ear toward me, revealing as fine a specimen of the cauliflower as ever came to maturity.

"Prize ring?"

"Yes, sir." He blushed as at our first meeting. "I weigh in at one hundred and twenty-six. One

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or two fights a week. Married and got a kid. Pick up about a hundred iron men a week and give 'em to the wife. Hustle crates on the dock during the day at five per. Not so bad."

"Champ some day, I suppose."

"No, sir; nothing like that. Preliminaries. But I can knock a dub as far as anybody else in Jersey. I go on in a Hoboken club next Saturday night. Will you come over? I could do better if you were there. Got my picture yet?" There was a wistful look in his face.

"I've still got your picture, Charley, and I'll be there—with bells on."

"You'll see something, Mr. Davis," said he, with his old assurance. "And the tickets are on me. My guest."

Arriving at the ringside I found that my seat was in one of the fighting corners, near enough for me to inhale resin and get the spray from the water bucket. Charley, under an alias, stepped into the ring for the third bout and was directed by the referee to take the opposite corner. He expostulated violently and was motioned over to the corner where I sat.

"Trying to separate *us*," he said, leaning down and offering me his bandaged hand. "Watch me close, I'm right to-night."

The first and second rounds were corkers. Charley took a few on the chin, one in the mouth that tapped the claret and came back for more.

MY OFFICE BOY AS AN EQUAL

He had courage and speed though shy on skill. Willing? Very. And lots of friends in the house. In the third round he jabbed his opponent three times and hooked him into my corner. Several times I caught a flash from Charley's eyes as he looked down at me. Suddenly he crossed his left and rocked the enemy into a daze. Whereupon with incredible swiftness he let fly a right punch that landed with amazing accuracy on the chin of the Hoboken Wildecat and dropped him so close to my corner that had it not been for the platform he would have landed in my lap.

In the midst of the pandemonium that broke loose my old office boy leaned over the ropes and in a voice of triumph, with his cupped glove at his crimsoned lips, shouted:

“Hey, Bob! Did you get that?”

In one sentence and for the first and only time he had made me his equal, after which he blushed again, vaulted out of the ring and disappeared toward his dressing room.



I left the building with the feeling that perhaps I had in some way or another helped him to win that fight, though I never saw him more. I hope he sees this story and understands.

It's all right with me, Charley.

XIII

THE STRANGE TOUR OF THE "BULL RIDER OF SMITHTOWN"

LAST summer, in the warmth of a glorious autumnal sun under an apple tree on the lawn of the Wyandanch Club on Long Island, I talked with Ben Tyler, who sixty years ago was born not three miles from the spot where we stood. The whole countryside was pulsing with life and movement. Along the Jericho Pike rolled a procession of motors, trucks groaning under tons of garden stuff and horses plodding their weary way.

"I often think of old Richard Smith, the bull rider," said Ben, falling into a reminiscent mood, "when I look out over this landscape, and wonder if he had any idea of the future when Long Island would be populated from one end to the other."

"And what do you know about the bull rider?" I asked.

"Nothing except what my grandmother told me when I was a boy. Fact is, there wasn't much else to talk about in these parts then." He picked up a windfall apple and went to peeling it as he

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rambled back into the seventeenth century. "It appears that the Pequod Indians came down from Rhode Island and captured Coney Island, after which they moved across Long Island and made an attack on old Chief Wyandanch and his thirteen tribes living at that time along the north shore. Eventually they captured Wyandanch's daughter and held her for ransom. Lyman Gardiner, owner of Gardiner's Island, now owned by Clarence Mackay, negotiated for the return of the princess to her father. The price paid was two head of work cattle, thirty pounds of beads and two ropes. Gardiner sent the girl to the old chief, who proposed in return to give Gardiner a tract of land on the north shore of the island.

"Well, Gardiner didn't especially care for this section, so he made a proposition to Richard Smith to take the tract offered by Chief Wyandanch at a price of forty pounds. After a conference the chief agreed that Smith could have all the land he could encompass in a single day between sunrise and sunset. Nothing was said about the means of locomotion, so Smith decided to ride a white trotting bull that he had trained to cover distance, there being no horses on the island at that time.

"Smith groomed the bull for the journey. His first move was to lead the beast one afternoon down to Fort Salonga on the Sound. There he rested all night and began his tour at sunrise the

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next morning. He went six miles directly south, arriving at 9 A.M. where Commack now stands. Guided by his pocket compass he rode east nine miles to Lake Ronkonkoma, arriving at noon. There he stopped, ate some biscuits which he carried with him and rubbed his bull down."

At that moment a demon riding a motor cycle dashed past us at sixty miles an hour with the exhaust open.

"Took him six hours to make fifteen miles through the scrub oak and the jack pines," continued Tyler as the motor cycle disappeared southward. "And he had to stop every so often and blaze a tree on one side and put a double blaze on both sides whenever he changed his direction. That was part of the agreement with old Wyandanch. From Ronkonkoma he set his course due north through the thickest timber on the island, and came out at sundown near Stony Brook, which added seven miles to his string—a total of twenty-two miles on the back of the white bull. The poor critter was about all in, but when the journey was over Bull Rider Smith, as he afterward was called, became the owner of all that tract of land now occupied by Kings Park, Smithtown, St. James and Hauppauge, including eight or ten miles of shore line on Long Island Sound. Chief Wyandanch sent a party of Indians out over the route, checked up the blazed trees and made a deed transferring the tract to 'Richard Smith, the Bull

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Rider.' Under the signature of Smith he signed 'His Mark.' That document is still on file in Smithtown."

Just then an eight-passenger touring car filled with gay travelers came tearing along and faded away on the Smithtown Pike.

"The bull rider had hardly settled on his empire before the Dutch came over and took possession of the whole tract. Smith went to Holland, began suit and succeeded in getting a deed from the Dutch. It looked for a time as though he had cleared his titles, but in the 1660's the English put in at the mouth of the Nissequogue River and took the property in the name of the Crown. Bull Rider Smith promptly sailed for England and spent his last dollar fighting for his rights. He won in the end, and the British Government cleared the title for the last time. The original deed from Chief Wyandanch gave him and his heirs the fowling and fishing privileges forever; a happy hunting ground, alive with otter, deer, trout, salmon, wild turkey, partridge and prairie chicken. Smith had nine children, all of whom settled in Smithtown, married and raised families."

We saw high up in the blue firmament seven flying machines sliding toward Montauk Point in formation at the rate of eighty miles an hour.

Ben began to peel another apple, with one eye cocked heavenward. "My own people have lived

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here for many generations. Grandmother was a Folger. Her mother came over from England in a ship with Benjamin Franklin, for whom I was named. She also was at the reception to Lafayette and the silk dress she wore is still in the family. Even during her lifetime conditions were so primitive that the men folks hunted wild ducks with long poles. They used to get on a point of land before daybreak and lie down in the tules, holding the poles upright like flagstaffs. When the ducks came in to feed and settled on the water the poles would be slammed down upon them. Some good bags were made. Firearms were scarce; ammunition, high. Bull Rider Smith lies buried over by the Nissequogue River. He died in 1692, two hundred years after Columbus discovered this continent."

Suddenly a six-ton truck, tarpaulin covered, thundered down the pike. The driver, a tough bird, seemed anxious to get somewhere.

He acted to me like a wholesale bootlegger doing his best to reach Manhattan before sundown.

Ben drowned his reflections in the juice of his second apple.

Peace to the Bull Rider.

XIV

DELVING INTO THE DRAMA THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF SPIRITS

WHEN a man stands face to face with his fate, there is nothing left to be done but to go forward. As far back as I can remember the fatal gift of hesitation was not one of my shortcomings. For example: A prosperous hotel keeper and myself were holding a séance one night out West in a barricaded card room where he had rounded up a colored bootblack named Giles, who was a trance medium.

At the time about which I write the fat Boniface and myself were casting hungry eyes upon the drama and were making plans to take an Indian show down to San Francisco and knock the people of the Golden Gate more or less dead. The vehicle we selected was the old border drama known as "The Jibonanesey," full of blood and thunder, scalpings, incendiarism and revenge. The title was changed to "The Shanowakin" which means "the white devil."

We rounded up a full cast of Piute and Washoe red men, a wardrobe of war bonnets, tomahawks,

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shields fashioned of rawhide, moccasins, implements of torture and horse tails. Johnny Mack, the chief of the local fire department, possessing the most thunderous bass voice in captivity and a craving for the stage, was selected to play the rôle of the courageous white settler whose business it was to outwit the Indians and save his family from massacre in the third act.

It was at this juncture that Johnny Giles was called in to do a trance and tell us what the future held in store for the producers. He got right down to business the moment the door was locked and the lights turned low.

"I see many faces," he began, "all looking in the same direction . . . all happy . . . all smiling."

"That's the audience," said my partner in a hushed voice.

"They are standing up . . . cheering. A man is coming out of a small office with a satchel . . . it is heavy."

"The receipts, kid. The box office. What else do you see, Johnny?" my associate asked.

"People in an aisle . . . talking, shaking hands. . . . It is now getting dark," droned the trance medium.

"The show is a big hit. Everybody pleased. Do you see any railroad trains, Johnny? Are we going on the road from San Francisco?"

That seemed to be a sane question to me, but Johnny at that moment was shaken by a physical

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tremor and opened his eyes slowly. The business of blacking boots all day and finishing up in a trance was telling upon him. He sat there with a sad look on his face, which was the color of wet ashes.

"Looks to me, Gil," I said to my partner, "as if we had enough to start on. Big audiences, the house sold out and everybody pleased. Whadda you say? There's millions . . ."

"Sure fire. You hop to Frisco and look the ground over. Fix the newspapers, get a theater, have some billing done and wire me when to come on with the troupe. Johnny Mack and I will rehearse the show and get it in shape for the stage director. Better leave to-morrow night."

The next day, fortified with limited sinews of war, I started for San Francisco to make the preliminary survey and fix the press. The idea looked good all the way and within a week I telegraphed to hustle down with all the props and the band of red men.

I met the company on the Oakland Mole with a group of newspaper men. The interest was intense and we entered the city of San Francisco with a hired band. The braves, fifteen in all, were taken to a Mission street lodging house and made comfortable with their squaws. From one of the theaters we borrowed a leading lady and got some children from an orphan asylum to make up the family for the big massacre.

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The rehearsals went on bravely, war whoops, screams and pistol shots adding to the general din and contributing publicity.

We were all ready to open at the Academy of Music of a Saturday night, when the landlady of the Indians' boarding house complained that the troupers had begun to smell a bit high and would we "have the kindness to show them the Pacific Ocean so they could get a bath."

That particular ceremony would have been a huge success had we not supplied to each of the bathers a cake of laundry soap. The chemical action of the lye and the salt water in the raven locks of the red men tied their hair into knots.

Fifteen barbers worked all day to get the kinks out and at 8:15 Saturday night the curtain was ready to be raised. If I do say it myself, the production was a corker. The first and second acts went across with wild gusto. Johnny Mack was a knockout. Gil and I stood out in front congratulating ourselves and chatting with the critics.

Third Act: A prairie scene showing a low hut gutted by fire; a mother and three children bound hand and foot guarded by treacherous Indians in war paint. Johnny Mack, the Shanowakin, standing against a stake with his hands tied behind him and a pile of fagots at his feet. He was about to see his wife and children tortured and burned alive. Slow music. The Indians began to swarm from the wings, dancing as they came, swirling

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around the stake, chanting the death song. Suddenly, and quite apart from the action called for in the play, a young brave strolled up to Mr. Mack and busted a wooden tomahawk over his brow. Another child of the plains cut loose with a spear and jabbed the genius in the stomach. A Washoe buck was getting out some arrows to shoot into the "Man With the Voice" and a Piute squaw was on the point of throwing a package of orphans into the orchestra, when an usher, scenting trouble, blew a police whistle. The scene shifters rushed out and began pulling the Indians off Mr. Mack, who was now the center of a general attack. The United States cavalry, playing seven up in the wings and waiting for the cue to come to the rescue of the Shanowakin and his family, was called half an hour ahead of time and did noble work in throwing red men into the basement. The riot scene closed the show and the curtain fell amid the havoc.

Gil and I hurried behind, arriving in time to hear the stage director explain to a cop that he had given each of the Indians, squaws and all, a slug of brandy before the curtain rose on the third act "just to make 'em sparkle, and pitch the act high."

* * *

Well, they pitched it out of San Francisco into perdition; that's all.

XV

THE S O S CALL THAT REQUIRED A BASEBALL UMPIRE

THIS story belongs on the sporting page of some newspaper, but as it deals in a great measure with the sea and not the ball park it might just as well come to life here.

* * *

In July, 1912, the steamship *North American*, out of Chicago, plying the Great Lakes, carrying five hundred men, women and children, struck a sandbar off Little Duck Shoals in the Straits of Mackinac, where, under the urging of a stiff gale, she began to pound herself to pieces. Dawn was breaking, but the heavy fog rendered it impossible to see any distance.

The Marconi wireless plant was operated by George F. Worts, who has since distinguished himself as a novelist and communicates nowadays only with cashiers of the publishing houses. The moment the *North American* indicated a disposition to pile up on the bar Mr. Worts began signaling the several points within the radius of his instruments. He got no response.

THE S O S CALL

A first-class panic was in process of development, the passengers, half clad, swarming from their staterooms to the upper deck. The captain forced his way to the wireless room and took counsel with the operator.

"If you can't raise the land stations," said he, "send out an S O S. The ship won't stand much more of this pounding without opening her seams."

Above the roar of the spark leaping into space in search of a receptive antenna sounded the cries of the passengers, the weeping mothers and children and the commands of officers bent on pacifying the mob.

Worts plied his key, every nerve in his body reaching into the ether for some contact with the outer world.

"*Dot dot dot dash dash dash dot dot dot*"—the S O S.

Between intervals of silence, his ears glued to the receiving tubes, Worts listened for the faint, scarcely audible evidence that the signal had been heard.

"We've got to raise help," urged the captain as he bent over the operator transmitting his insistent call. "Try 'em again."

"*Dot dot dot dash dash dash dot dot dot.*" Silence.

Suddenly Worts, electrified, his eyes flashing as though he could actually see the signal he

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sought, sprawled over his receiver summoning all his auricular powers. "I've got it. Coming in," he announced under his breath.

"What station? . . . What ship? . . . How far away?" asked the captain anxiously, piling his questions one upon the other.

"I can't tell yet. He's sending. Wait," said Worts, waving the captain back.

In the tense five minutes that followed, interrupted by the chaotic discord below and by the repeated and insistent appeal from the captain for the details, the following inappropriate, unsolicited and utterly damnable information was poured upon the eardrums of Mr. Worts by a green operator somewhere "out there" in the dim, breaking dawn:

"Chicago, 3; New York, 1. Error by Doyle cost Giants game."

A thrilling response to a cry for help from five hundred passengers about to sink or swim! Mr. Worts jammed the receivers into his ears and hunched forward like one listening for the crack of doom.

"Pittsburgh, 5; Brooklyn, 4. Carey won game by single to right."

"What does he say?" asked the captain, his nervousness increasing. Worts made no reply; but the yap wireless man continued:

"Philadelphia, 5; Cincinnati, 0. Alexander's pitching shut out Cincinnati."

THE S O S CALL

The excitement among the excursionists was mounting momentarily and the crew had its hands full pulling people back who wanted to jump overboard and take their chances.

"Nine games separate the Giants and the Cubs."

"Send out another S O S," demanded the captain.

"I can't send anything until he gets off the key," barked the operator. "When he gets through—"

"Boston standing .687; Washington .607."

It would have been madness to tell the captain that the green operator was on the air with B B S (Baseball Score), instead of S O S (Suspend Other Service).

"Assassins who shot Herman Rosenthal are known to police. Seven in plot."

And then the greenhorn, after adding twenty years in five minutes to the life of George F. Worts, opened up and waited the reply.

It came like a blast from the infernal regions, the roar of the spark braiding a full line of profanity into the circumambient ether. Not in the history of wireless had such a stream of accumulated, pungent, progressive and curse-laden abuse been hurled from an operator's sensitive fingers. A government wireless station picked up the flow of lava and called down the profane

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operator on the sinking *North American*. The air quivered under the blast.

Suddenly the greenhorn caught the real thing, the agonizing call for help, the appalling alphabetical cry from a foundering ship:

“*Dot dot dot dash dash dash dot dot dot.*”
The cry for help.

The position of the battered *North American* was soon fixed and other ships in the neighborhood were notified. Relief came from several directions and the ship was towed off the bar without the loss of a single life or even a casualty.

The baseball score never reached the ears of any one on board except the Marconi operator himself. It wasn't even passed along to the captain.

When the *North American* operator told me this harrowing tale I asked him how the greenhorn behaved after he realized his bad break.

“Oh, man, it was pitiful,” replied Worts. “I felt sorry for him. The message of apology came falteringly and broken as though a sick and feeble hand had been laid upon the key; a trembling and frail voice, as it were, trickling through his nerveless fingers. Only wireless men can understand the tragedy of that reply.”

“But the baseball dope?”

“Perfect; sent by a buoyant soul.”

XVI

CONCERNING "THE WAY OF A CADDIE WITH A MAN"

THIS story is dedicated to all golf players and to all caddies, and may be read with profit by all peoples. Those who play the ancient and honorable game and have humane impulses toward the bag bearers will not regret that the story has at last leaked out. Those who are brutal and selfish and unkind to the boys who follow them down the fairway and into the rough and back again may come to understand the phrase: "If you like your caddie your caddie will like you."

* * *

To present the characters in chronological order would wholly destroy the force of the narrative. Therefore I begin in the middle and start the tale with two golfers stepping up to the first tee for a round of eighteen holes. The elder of the two was a kindly man who played a deliberate game, kept his head down, followed through and, out of consideration for his caddie, was content with seven clubs in a light canvas bag.

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The other player, much younger, saturated with resolves, pride in his game and impatience, required twelve clubs and a heavy leather bag which when loaded weighed as much as a drummer's valise.

On the first hole he sliced his ball into the lush, expectant high grass and burst into a flood of imprecations embracing all present. Lost ball. Dropping another he got the hole in eight.

On the second tee he delivered a long lecture to the caddie on the subject of watching the ball. "I am not here to do your work," he remarked, flushing with resentment. "Now keep your eye peeled."

Dubbing his next shot he called the caddie back and with a snarl yanked a mashie out of the bag, throwing his driver on the grass at the boy's feet. Six strokes, missing a short putt. "Stand off the green when I am putting," he barked as he strode to the third tee.

A long, sweet drive came at last to repose in a divot scar. Unable to fix the responsibility on his caddie he cut loose and abused the greens committee. "Gimme a mashie niblick and stand over there. Quit moving. Don't rattle that bag." Topped it and glared at his opponent, who was the personification of serenity. The next shot was over the green into a trap. As this book goes into the homes of the people I can't quote him.

THE WAY OF A CADDIE

From hole to hole he chafed and fretted. "Get back; you are casting a shadow," though the heavens were clouded and the sun was hidden. "Stop that chattering." The boy had said nothing. "Put that flag down." The flag was already down. "You gave me the wrong club." It was the club he asked for.

Finishing the ninth hole in fifty-four he took the bag from his caddie and waved the boy aside. "Go back to the clubhouse. Tell the caddie master you are not satisfactory. I'll carry my own bag. That's all."

Rating is as priceless to a caddie as it is to a banker. Small wonder that the boy was distressed, that his chin trembled at being sent back to bear the news of his disgrace. Without a word he turned and slowly crossed the course, taking a circuitous route so that he would have time to prepare his dire message.

"That caddie doesn't like me," said the grouch to his friend, "and I'm damn sure I don't like him. It is disgusting here on this oldest American course, these perfect greens, this cool and exhilarating day with an old friend, that I have my whole game ruined by that kid. Thank God he's gone."

The next six holes were played in strained silence. The game that rejuvenates and maketh the heart glad had lost its savor. Nothing could revive the glory of the shattered afternoon. On

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the sixteenth tee, which is sheltered in a bower of verdant beauty, the two players sat down to rest. Nothing was said until the older player broke the silence.

“Several years ago,” he began, tapping the turf with the head of his driver, “a little kid from Yonkers came up here and was taken on as a caddie. Wonderfully sweet-natured boy; quick-witted, willing and had a nose for golf. Everybody liked him. His name was William; he had a club foot. But that didn’t affect his quality as a caddie. Pleasure to go out with him. A certain famous doctor, member of the club, became interested in William and took the boy south on a long trip. When William returned he went back to caddying; the doctor, suffering from an incurable malady, gave up his practice and retired.

“One morning I was playing a round with William carrying my bag. Spring was running riot all over Westchester county and the fields and hedges were alive with blossoms. William gathered flowers until he had quite a bouquet.

“ ‘Who’s the girl, William?’ I asked.

“ ‘I haven’t any girl, sir,’ he said sheepishly. I joked with him about it and with just a touch of apology he replied. ‘My friend, the doctor, is dead. Twice a week I take flowers to his grave.’ ”

“There’s a caddie worth having,” said the grouch.

THE WAY OF A CADDIE

“Well, to make a long story short,” continued the narrator, disregarding the interruption, “when the doctor died he was buried from St. John’s, Yonkers. When the body was brought out of the church there on the steps, with six other caddies, stood William. Each boy had a large bouquet of wild flowers which he placed upon the coffin. And some of the flowers fell off; and the boys followed the casket and picked them up again and replaced them and boyish tears were shed to the very door of the hearse. William and those six caddies did that because—they loved him.” The old golfer ceased speaking.

“What became of William?” was the husky query.

“He carried your bag to-day for the first nine holes—or until you sent him back.”

“But you said William had a club foot.”

“And so he did until his friend the doctor took him away on that Southern trip, operated, and brought him back whole again. Yes, sir, no finer caddie exists on this earth.” The old golfer stepped up to his ball to address it, talking as he moved: “And it is well to remember that *if you like your caddie your caddie will like you.* FORE!”

* * *

The sequel is that the grouch went back to the clubhouse, found William, apologized, withdrew

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his complaint and in a letter of genuine sympathy to the boy's widowed mother, sent his check for one hundred dollars for a suit of clothes and some neckties and shoes; and also three bouquets of wild flowers each week for the grave of the man who won the affection of his caddie.

XVII

WHEN MY BROTHER SAM AND MARK TWAIN COOKED A DINNER

IN 1862 young Sam Clemens, after serving a brilliant apprenticeship as a reporter on the *Virginia City* (Nevada) *Territorial Enterprise*, became its city editor. The first flashes of the humor that made him world famous appeared in the columns of that paper.

With him were associated other rare spirits whose names are not to be forgotten. Among them were Bret Harte, Dan De Quille and Joseph T. Goodman. Steve Gillis, the man who told Clemens the Jumping Frog story, was then a compositor on the *Enterprise*.

Clemens' popularity resulted in his departure from the Comstock to take up the writing of books in conjunction with lecture tours. In the meantime my brother, Sam Davis, had come to the staff of the *Enterprise* and joined the crowd in which Clemens was the leading spirit. Under the pseudonym of "Mark Twain" the former Comstocker had become the nation's most celebrated humorist, and as such the apple of Nevada's eye. Small

BOB DAVIS RECALLS

wonder that, several years later, upon visiting the haunts of his youth, he should be accorded the keys.

At one of the receptions Mark was introduced by Sam to two sisters, both of whom were celebrated for their wit and one of whom was the wife of Sheriff Brophy. Mark, having found kindred souls, was at his best.

"Ladies," he said, as the reception was breaking up, "Sam Davis and I would appreciate it very much if you would be our guests at a dinner which we propose to cook and serve in your honor."

"I can't cook," announced Sam, turning upon Twain when the coast was clear.

"No more can I," admitted Mark, "but the invitations are out and it's your business to see that nothing goes wrong at the forthcoming meal. No man shall interfere with my diet."

Providentially, my brother lived in the only building in the city that had the characteristics of a flat house. There were two apartments side by side on each of the four floors. At the rear was a crude fire escape, uniting at each back window. The twin to the Davis apartment was occupied by the widow Kosser, who was regarded as the best all round cook on the Comstock Lode. With that talented and obliging woman he made arrangements to prepare a five-course repast, place it course by course upon the fire escape so

MY BROTHER SAM AND MARK TWAIN

that he and Mark Twain could bring it to the banquet board, and thus carry out the illusion of their culinary supremacy.

It was a cold night on Mount Davidson and the snow was falling when Mark Twain with the guests came into the cozy little flat in which the repast was about to be served. Mr. Davis, wearing a cook's apron around his waist, greeted the folks with cordiality and disposed them in easy chairs.

"Mark, you'll have to help me serve," said he to the arch conspirator. "I gave the cook a night off so that we could spread this simple supper in our own way." He handed Mark an apron and escorted him into the ostensible kitchen.

The two fakers made some off-stage noises on a heating stove in the hallway and rattled some tin-ware in a sink. The signal was passed to Mrs. Kosser and after a proper delay Messrs. Twain and Davis suddenly appeared in the dining room with four plates of steaming cream of tomato soup, fresh from the fire escape. The effect was sensational and the ladies were quite overcome.

"Be deliberate," said Mark. "The fish course is on the broiler and will require ten minutes at least."

"Fifteen, Mark," interrupted Sam. "Trout can't be rushed. Open that white wine."

Another excursion to the rear and the pretenders reappeared with a platter of trout and a cucumber salad.

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"A perfect dressing," said Mrs. Brophy.
"What is the secret?"

"Kind of a Norwegian sauce," replied Sam.

"Made with patent salt," added Mark.
"What's the next marvel, Sam?"

"Mallard ducks with fried hominy and wild grape jelly."

"Nineteen minutes; no more," observed Twain, lifting his glass.

"I beg your pardon, twenty-one minutes in this altitude," said the cook with determination.

"Gentlemen!" from Mrs. Brophy's sister.
"That is a matter for the Supreme Court."

The supper went merrily on until it was time for the ducks. Sam handed the author of *Innocents Abroad* a bottle of Burgundy from the mantelpiece, where it had been absorbing the temperature of the room, and strolled to the kitchen.

"Come out on the fire escape," pleaded Mrs. Kosser, "so that I can pass this hooded silver salver to you. It is quite heavy. Careful."

Sam crawled into the open and received the *pièce de résistance*, just at which precise moment his foot slipped on the light snowfall. To save himself from a three-storied pitch into the back yard he discarded the platter of mallards and slid back into his own window. The ducks, once more on the wing, left the salver and with the silver receptacle crashed through the skylight of a barber shop which extended into the compound

MY BROTHER SAM AND MARK TWAIN

below. The hottest and largest duck hit a half-shaved customer (who happened to be Sheriff Brophy) in the neck and the salver all but scalped the boss barber. It was plain to the victims in the tonsorial parlor whence the bombardment had come. Brophy cursed audibly.

My esteemed brother slammed down the window, and returning to the dining room, white to the gills, asked for five quiet minutes in which to do some heavy reflecting. His guests sensed that something had gone wrong.

In a very short time, some one, evidently in a great hurry, galloped up the stairs and began banging for admission. Mark Twain opened the door. In stepped Sheriff Brophy.

"Who the —— threw this hot mallard duck at me?" he demanded.

"Isn't it what you ordered?" asked Twain, observing the need for delay. "Would you prefer a canvasback?"

Mrs. Brophy burst into laughter and broke the tension in time to avert an apoplectic stroke on the part of the sheriff, who, in turn, recognized Clemens, his sister-in-law, and my discomfited brother Sam. Mrs. Kosser was called upon to save the day with a line of country sausage as a substitute for the mallard duck fiasco. Ice cream, coffee, cigars and reconciliation.

All of that merry company have since passed away. Twain was the last to go.

XVIII

THE AMERICAN ARMY CAPTAIN WHO SALUTED FOUR KINGS

DURING the holidays of the year 1891 an American, accompanied by his wife and younger son, a boy of five, arrived at Athens, Greece, on a tour of the world. The youngster had in his possession a dozen or more diminutive calling cards bearing his name.

CHARLES A. FOWLER, Jr.

United States

The visiting list of a child is necessarily limited; but the juvenile tourist, undismayed by his obscurity, informed his parents that he intended to take his governess and call upon King George of Greece.

They were received by a flabbergasted imperial flunky at the gate to the palace. The card of the visitor was accepted in silence, carefully inspected

CAPTAIN WHO SALUTED FOUR KINGS

and finally taken within. In a few moments King George emerged from somber recesses of royal retirement and shook hands with the young American. He directed an attendant to escort the boy and his governess through the nursery of the royal family and to show them the toys of the children.

* * *

In the year 1904 the junior Fowler, a student at the University of Geneva, was taken by his father on a trip to the North Cape. The private yacht of the Hohenzollern, with the Emperor on board, was anchored in one of the Norwegian fiords. A special day was set aside for the public inspection, the deck for William being roped off. On the far side of the *verboden* area the Kaiser, accompanied by two aids, walked with measured tread. Just as he came opposite, young Fowler swung himself and his girl companion to a right about face and made a salute to the imperial German, which the Kaiser returned with promptness and military precision. In a few moments one of his aides stepped under the rope, saluted the young couple, clicked his heels and invited them with the Emperor's compliments to visit every part of the yacht.

* * *

In 1913, having completed his education abroad after graduation from the Cutler School in his

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own country, Charles A. Fowler, Jr., found himself at Governors Island training in the Officers' Reserve Corps for military duty. He finished his studies at Fort McPherson, Georgia, and after a polishing course at the officers' school at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, attained the rank of captain in the regular army.

When the crash that drew America into the World War came, Captain Fowler, 325th Infantry, Second Battalion, embarked for the French front by way of England. The 325th was reviewed in London by George V. Captain Fowler, passing with his battalion, halted, saluted the King of England, and passed into the vortex that yawned on the Continent.

To George of Greece, William of Germany, George of England, Charles A. Fowler, Jr., had lifted his right hand in salutation and received response. How odd that now he should be embroiled in a death struggle between the latter two! Three kings and the deal unfinished.

* * *

Daybreak, October 11, 1918, in the Argonne.

The American troops, harassed by bombardments and engagements all the previous night, had come to a concentration on a plateau. An order came directing Captain Fowler to deploy his men. There was barely enough light to define the skyline; it was insufficient to reveal the enemy that

CAPTAIN WHO SALUTED FOUR KINGS

was prepared to meet the American troops. On the crest of the plateau Captain Fowler, leading his men, met the concentrated fire of the opposing forces. At the first volley he fell, pierced by two bullets, one through the head and the other through the chest. Three other officers fell with him. A hail of death swept the plateau: only nine men were left to tell the story.

* * *

Noon, next day, Union League Club, New York.

A few members were seated in the lounge discussing news from the front, when the information was brought in that Captain Charles A. Fowler, Jr., like his father a member of the organization, had been killed in the Argonne. Inquiry revealed the fact that the senior Fowler was visiting his brother at East Fishkill, in Dutchess county, where many of the Fowlers were born.

"How can we get this news to his father?" asked a member. "He should know about it at once. I hesitate to shock him by telephone."

"Gentlemen," spoke up an older member, "Colonel Fowler comes from a family of soldiers. They have been in every war for this country since the Revolution. One of his brothers, Major Fowler, was a West Point man under whom Pershing served in the Spanish-American War. His eldest son was in the tank division. He would resent the withholding of this important news and you

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may rest assured he will receive it like a man. Telephone him immediately."

Colonel Fowler could not be reached at that hour, but later in the day, from another station, I got in touch with him. Herewith the telephonic conversation verbatim:

"I have some bad news for you."

"About Charley?" His voice was calm.

"Yes. In the Argonne; yesterday at daybreak, leading his troops."

"Any particulars?" Still calm.

"Instantaneous. No details."

There was a perceptible pause at the other end of the wire, broken by what sounded like a long, deep breath. And then I heard the sentence, somewhat detached from the phone as though spoken aside:

"He has met the Fourth King."

Again clearly and directly into the mouthpiece the father of the soldier spoke:

"Thank you, sir, for calling me. Good-by."

* * *

Thirty days afterward the armistice was declared. In the interval, at the request of his father, Captain Charles A. Fowler, Jr., who had met face to face the King of Kings, was laid to rest in France with his comrades of the 325th Infantry to keep him company until the day breaks again.

XIX

PROFESSOR LE CONTE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DESCENT OF MAN

THIS story should appeal to all classes of people as well as several more or less important individuals. It will be discussed in the University of California, at Berkeley; among the participants in the Scopes evolution trial in once peaceful Tennessee; in the palace of a great newspaper proprietor who is still active, and in the not too humble homes of a managing editor and a first-class reporter who long ago escaped from the jungles of journalism and are now, chastened and calm, residing in the open.

The late Homer Davenport, America's leading cartoonist during his generation, appears in the rôle of the unconscious villain of the piece. The moral of this folklore tale shows the danger of permitting an artist to play with a pencil.

The proprietor of the newspaper upon which Davenport was employed was an amateur photographer who pressed a mean button and spent his money freely. He was both patron and exhibitor at the Amateur Photographic Society's

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annual exhibition at that moment being held in the Academy of Science Building on Market street, San Francisco. This meant that the picture show had to be covered in first-class style. The best reporter on the paper was turned loose to do the neat and needful.

"Let yourself go on the text," said the managing editor. "We have a great layout of pictures and will smear the stuff over three or four columns. The Boss wants Davenport to drop in and make some sketches. He'll liven the page up. Get your own copy in early and pay no attention to Davy, who will turn his pictures in to the art department direct, where they'll be rushed. I have just telephoned Homer that the Boss is all for the exhibition, so we can depend on that boy coming through like Michael Strogoff." He did.

On the same night and in the same building, Professor Joseph Le Conte, popular and famous member of the faculty of the University of California, delivered an epoch-making university extension lecture on "Evolution." In the audience sat Homer, armed with pad and pencil. Packed about him were the thinking people of California.

The brilliant scientist shook his white locks and shaggy beard to the wind and with little or no preamble threw a back somersault into the Azoic, that age which contained no trace of life. He passed through the intervening ages to the later Paleozoic, summoning illustrations as to the ages

PROFESSOR LECONTE

of fishes, amphibia and swamp forests; thence with accumulating comparisons through the Mesozoic to the Cenozoic, the age of mammals—the ancestors of man. It was a marvelous summary of the story of mankind and all other life, presented brilliantly (without apology) in the fashion of the exhibit now in the Museum of Natural History in New York.

Regardless of approval of the audience as a whole, Professor Joseph Le Conte made a whale of an impression on the imagination of Davenport. Homer just sat there and drank himself full of the Pliocene period and quaffed the Silurian to the dregs. He didn't miss a trick from the moment the great savant led out *Pithecanthropus Erectus*, Esq., whose offspring reappeared "half a million years later" in the rôle of the popular and attractive Neanderthal Man, a personality capable of exercising the franchise of his own free will.

Davenport showed his superiority over the dull wits of the Stone Age by hustling back to the office, where he completed his pictorial idea of how to illustrate a lecture by Joseph Le Conte on the subject of evolution.

And on the next day—not the next century but the next day, as I have written—the intelligentsia of San Francisco opened its morning paper at the breakfast board just to see how the world had wagged over night. In the early pages done in

BOB DAVIS RECALLS

masterly style was an excellent story of the Amateur Photographic Society's exhibit, followed by local news, politics and society. And on another page! Let us have a look that we may understand why shudders ran up the spines of California's best people residing in the region of San Francisco, especially Berkeley. Spread across the seven columns was a full report of Le Conte's lecture on "Evolution." Oh! see the pictures:

Beginning at the right topmost corner of the page and completely bisecting it was a series of amazing and daring cartoons in the best Davenport style depicting first an ebullient ring-tailed monkey in the primordial forest, swinging by his tail toward the second cartoon, half a million years later, and so on by easy simian stages through the series of pictorial gaps down the page (not upward) until, improved and improving, divested finally of all primeval ferocity and suggestion, appearing at last in the person of the beloved Joseph Le Conte lecturing on the antiquity and descent of man. The whitened hair and the characteristic beard were so deftly arranged in the last picture as to carry the illusion that the distinguished geologist would be delighted, if the audience would grant him ten minutes, to revert to type, swing from the grand chandelier by his tail and juggle a few peanuts for the young folks.

There was the devil to pay in that newspaper shop and no pitch on the fire. In conclusion it

PROFESSOR LECONTE

was discovered that Davenport, misunderstanding the telephone instructions, had gone to the Academy of Science and followed the crowd which was more interested in evolution than photography. The night edition man, assuming that whatever the untrammelled cartoonist turned in "must" go, went to press with the pictures, and there you are.

The reporter who covered the photographic exhibit, having studied in his college days under the great Le Conte, undertook the highly diplomatic task of smoothing out the ruffled university fur. He wrote a dignified and artful note calling attention to the excellent report of the lecture, making no reference whatever to the Davenport cartoons. The gracious savant, whose inspiration and influence will ever be felt in the world of education, replied in this brief and cryptic note, which the recipient still retains:

"In all my life's work I have never before been so copiously reported."

His choice of the word "copiously" indicated his amusement over the incident. Le Conte neither then nor afterward made the slightest reference to Davenport's pictorial contribution to the descent of man, nor did he alter his lifelong conviction that somewhere in the remote past all mankind was up a tree.

XX

THE CAIRO GUIDE WHO PUT THE WORD "GYP" IN EGYPTIAN

SINCE my recent journey around the world, 1925-1926, I have seriously considered writing a book entitled *The Boob Abroad*. After my purchase of the sapphire in Ceylon, of which I wrote without shame in the volume *Over My Left Shoulder*, the impression has gone abroad that I have some of the characteristics of a hick. I have them *all*.

* * *

Last December I stood on the hot sands at the foot of the Pyramid of Cheops, or it might have been Chefren. They are all the same shape; just pyramids.

Camels, donkeys, dragomans, sheiks, guides, fortune tellers, beggars, tourists from all lands, and flies from everywhere fretted the landscape. Camel bells, shouting drivers, hawkers, braying jackasses. Mendicants clamoring for backshish and travelers asking foolish questions all contributed to the diabolical din. The Sphinx alone kept her mouth shut.

THE "GYP" IN EGYPTIAN

"Ex-cuse me, gentleman."

The voice was low and imploring. At my elbow stood a bronze giant garbed in a flowing robe buttoned tightly at the neck. Voluminous sleeves concealed his hands until he proffered a double-barreled salute, bowed magnificently and revealed a large collection of fake scarabs set in gaudy mountings.

"You would perhaps, alone, look upon the tomb of a king," he pleaded. "These scarabs, which you see upon my poor hands, are from the chamber where Rameses I. . . . Ex-amine my credentials. I am ap-pointed by the Government of Egypt to es-cort you in delight. . . . Shall we go to the tomb?" He was getting ready to sell me some beads on the way.

My white cork helmet, that every American tourist falls for, weighed less than nine ounces when I bought it in Cairo that morning. At noon it weighed three pounds and at 3 P.M. something close to a ton. The white duck suit that I donned earlier in the day had lost its slick, starched luster and, aside from being dusty, was wrinkled like an elephant's neck. The rubber soles on my shoes had begun to run and I was in an excellent mood to enter any tomb in Egypt where shade was guaranteed.

"If you have an inside room," I said, mopping all of my exposed and perspiring features with one movement, "I will join you. Let's go."

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“What you are about to see will re-main with you for-ever,” said he, striding away. I followed him around the corner of one of the pyramids and was escorted up the steep face for about fifty feet, arriving at an entrance that seemed to be the gateway to eternal darkness. I turned and looked back in the direction of Cairo, which shimmered in the distance, the sun reflecting like a burning glass from the mosque of Mohammed Ali. The Nile, appearing, disappearing and re-appearing, crawled like a platinum serpent across Egypt. At the base of the pyramid the puppet show of human interest moved kaleidoscopically.

I turned back to the tomb and followed the lordly Egyptian into the shadows. From somewhere in his vast raiment he had fished out a wax taper wound around a stick, the free end of which he had lighted.

“Come. It is written that you shall not forget. Allah is good. . . .” I followed into the cool depths.

“How long can I remain here?” I asked, my voice echoing. “How much an hour?”

“Ah! For you, twenty piasters” (one dollar). It was the first livable spot I had struck since leaving the high mountains of Sumatra a month before.

“This way. Slowly.” The light disappeared around the corner. I groped along the passage with caution.

THE "GYP" IN EGYPTIAN

"Wait a minute."

I heard the thud of a falling body, a ponderous mass slithering. Darkness. . . . And then a wild yell: "Allah at-tend. . . ." More silence.

"I am broken. The hand of death is up-on me. I expire here in the tomb of kings." He then set up a torrent of what must have been Egyptian profanity.

In the darkness I followed the route of his imprecations and presently stood near him. Striking a match I recovered the wax taper and lighted it. At my feet lay the guide, to all intents and purposes a stricken man.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

He threw out his hands in petition: "My poor legs failed me. I fell downward. I can-not arise. What will become of my family? Allah has deserted me. I am in this agony for twenty piasters."

So that was the cause of his downfall.

"Could you get up for thirty piasters?" I inquired.

"Im-possible," he wailed.

"Make it forty."

His reply was a low moan, and another appeal to Allah.

I had no desire to leave him there alone, but I needed the taper in order to get out. It was plainly a case of bidding for my liberty. Auto-

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matically I felt for some money and encountered, providentially, an American benzine cigar lighter, guaranteed by the manufacturers to burn for half an hour with the effulgence of a Democratic torch-light parade. Hope!

Withdrawing the nifty little device from my pocket I pressed the button. Lo and behold! A bright flame leapt up and the wax taper became pale in its presence.

"Listen, you big slob," I said with a ringing voice and a display of bravado. "You take me out of here or I go alone."

"Allah for-bid," he shouted. "You would be lost. For fifty piasters I will summon strength and we will go to-gether."

Confidentially, the cool passageway to the tomb of kings had become twice as hot as a Turkish bath and I was all for escaping at any price.

"Make it fifty. Here's twenty-five. The balance when we hit the sunlight." He literally clawed for the cash in hand, clambered to his feet and shook the dust from his garments like a Plymouth Rock chicken.

"Al-ways," he said softly, "I shall re-member you. Come."

In less than five minutes we came out into the full light of day, where he gypped me of the balance due and bowed himself away.

* * *

THE “GYP” IN EGYPTIAN

If the last of the Egyptians should happen to fall from the peak of the Pyramid of Cheops and break his neck—well, what of it?

And then some.

Egypt is described in Baedeker as “a low lying country.”

XXI

THE MAN WHO FOUND THAT HAPPINESS WAS CONTAGIOUS

WITH the stately St. Lawrence River flowing beneath the open window, a bright autumnal sun shining in a fleece-flecked sky and his wife and children about him, Thomas Henry Wheeler, in the eighty-third year of his splendid career, closed his eyes on the morning of September 15, 1926, and crossed that mythical stream which glides between the living and the dead. He was a soldier and a gentleman.

* * *

My first meeting with "the Commodore," as he was known among his intimates, carries me back twenty years to an evening when, with a young man who afterward married one of his daughters and who happens at the present moment to be the owner of *The New York Sun*, I called at 214 West Seventy-second street to discuss the pastime of angling for the small-mouth black bass.

"Now, my idea," said he over the cigars, "is that when a man passes sixty he should spend the

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winter in California, spring in New York City and summer on the St. Lawrence fishing. If you are as good as your conversation indicates I would suggest that you take a week-end, come up to Wauwinet Island in Alexandria Bay, where I have a simple shack, and see what we can do with a rod and reel."

The date of June 16, which opens the black bass season, was set as satisfactory to the contestants.

"You will probably need companionship going and coming," he continued, "and I will be glad if you will bring four of your friends along—good eaters and sleepers. That will give us a party of six. I don't care for bridge fiends, tennis players or fox-trotters on this trip. I furnish everything, 'cludin' fishing tackle, and I 'calls for and delivers.' All set for the St. Lawrence. You name the other four. They must be born fishermen."

In due course I received railroad and sleeper accommodations for Clayton, New York, with instructions to arrive on the morning of the fifteenth. No difficulty had been encountered in selecting four of the best sleepers, eaters and anglers in the U. S. A. We arrived at the rendezvous in a solid, expectant mass. At the Clayton dock lay the *Empress*, a 110-foot yacht loaded to the Plimsoll line with the sort of provisions that born fishermen crave.

The Commodore stood at the gangplank and

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greeted us with his cap in his hand. "Boys, you look good to me," he remarked, surveying the group. "Mr. Davis, I hand you the headgear. You're the captain of this craft. Make your friends at home. This trip I'm one of the crew and at your service." With that he placed his cap on my head and bowed us aboard. And I gave those New Yorkers a good time.

There is not space enough here to describe all the joys of that excursion. We "struck 'em" at Chippewa Bay and in three days caught 150 black bass running from two to four pounds. They certainly were there. For three successive years the same party fished the river on the opening day of the season and individual members from time to time were "captains of this ship" over a period of nearly twenty years. We fished every good ground on that mighty river, but Chippewa remained our capital.

On the center of the table in the mess room of the yacht *Empress* there sat always a silver pitcher upon which was engraved:

*We love the ocean and its tide,
The babbling brooks that pass our way,
The rivers we have fished beside—
But oh, you Chippewa Bay!*

JOHN H. O'BRIEN,
WILLIAM A. WILLIS,

WILLIAM HALPIN,
BLAIR FRAZER,

BOB DAVIS

HAPPINESS WAS CONTAGIOUS

The group is scattered: one of the five passed away two years ago. The Commodore has crossed the river for the last time. The remaining four expect to meet him on the other shore.

* * *

After the close of the Civil War, into which young Wheeler plunged at the age of seventeen from Elmira, New York, he began to gather data as to the whereabouts of his comrades. Forty years later, when prosperity came to him, he brought the remnants of his regiment together annually; and about ten years ago, when the thin blue line was fading into the mists of memory, he assembled all the living members of the Twenty-third New York Infantry, together with their wives and their posterity, in the old home town and bade them farewell. Though wounded at the battle of Bull Run and having been a prisoner in Libby and Tuscaloosa, he disliked to hear the Confederate soldiers called "rebels." He summed up his esteem in one sentence: "Braver men never fought for a lost cause." His favorite book was the Judge Priest tales, written about a Confederate judge by Irvin S. Cobb, the son of a Confederate soldier.

One winter's night, while a train was held up at Rome, New York, Commodore Wheeler stepped into the station and asked the agent if he knew a certain Bill Blank.

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“Why do you ask, stranger?”

“Because I was once in prison with him,” replied the Standard Oil man.

“Well, he’s still in prison,” announced the agent, “when did *you* get out?” Somehow, mysteriously, when Bill did emerge from the gray walls enough funds were placed at his disposal to make his declining years free from want.

The Commodore held to the theory that if unhappiness was contagious, so could happiness be made contagious, and that was his mission in this world. He had a divine genius for friendship which marked his career from the cradle to the grave. His children, his children’s children and his neighbors loved him.

I saw him last seated in the bay window of his St. Lawrence home gazing out at the blue river that he knew like a pilot. The soft gurgle of the current still reached his ears. Lying back on his pillows he reviewed the tide of traffic:

“... And I wonder if when a man has become a fixture in a chair,” said he slowly, “and can’t fish any more and can’t move among his friends—and is living in the past, whether . . . it isn’t just as well. . . .”

* * *

It has been said that a corporation has no soul. However, for the last forty years there had been

HAPPINESS WAS CONTAGIOUS

in the Standard Oil organization an individual with a soul, and that soul is now marching on to answer to the name of Thomas Henry Wheeler when the last trump blows.

XXII

ARTHUR BRISBANE'S BRUTALITY TOWARD A HOMELOVING SON

A GOOD many years ago, when Park Row was a mere alley of ambitions; when Dana was alive, and Amos Cummings and Julian Ralph and Cockerill and George Alfred Townsend and others were among the apostles of good journalism, Arthur Brisbane was editor of *The Evening Sun*. In those days the art of turning news into literature was the ambition of the entire staff. Bureaus and central sources for the collection and distribution of information in the form of flimsy copy had not reached the high state of perfection since attained.

When anything of importance happened in the next town or the suburbs, or any distance from the office, a first-class "leg man" went on the job and brought back all there was to bring back and turned it into readable English. The telephone was in its infancy, and rumors that came in over the whispering wire had to be and were verified by a trained reporter before the story got into cold type.

ARTHUR BRISBANE'S BRUTALITY

Brisbane preached the doctrine of accuracy and terseness. What was more to the point, he was the best living exponent of the style that has since given his writings distinction. Lucidity dominated the Brisbane school of reporting. He sought for and found men who could strip all the verbiage from a plain fact and keep it plain to the last paragraph. It mattered little to him who collected the details so long as they reached the readers in a clarified and readable form.

He drummed it into his contemporaries that the creative faculty came first and the imaginative faculty second. Park Row has ever been full of dreamers, but what he wanted was producers. It was not enough to plan a great story; his idea was to complete it. Facts, unadorned; all the facts. The reflections, the theories, the fulminations, for the editorial page. But the news: straight, relieved only by its relation to human emotion and its significance to the public mind.

In spite of that fixed principle which governed the paper under his direction he possessed a soaring admiration for narrative style, and any cub who gave evidence of possessing that divine gift found Arthur Brisbane's unrestrained approval.

On the staff was a young man from Philadelphia. He wrote with a fire that gave warmth to his reportorial productions. He saw life in its true application and carried his observations to

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logical conclusions without exceeding the limits of plausibility.

Brisbane suggested that he write fiction when not occupied with the news, or, better still, write fiction on his day off.

"I prefer, on that day," said the young man, "to visit my mother in Philadelphia. We are quite congenial and I believe it my duty to see her at least once a week."

"All right," replied Brisbane, "do a fiction story Saturday and take Sunday off to see your mother. But remember, no fiction Saturday, no Philadelphia Sunday. That's a certainty."

It was a difficult and irksome job for the Pennsylvanian to bend his quill to the new grind. He begged and pleaded for clemency, but the adamant Brisbane forced him to carry out the agreement.

The stories that came at first reluctantly from his pen soon began to flow smoothly and found a place in the columns of the paper. Readers of *The Evening Sun* watched for the new note that had crept too seldom into its columns. The writer alone was blind to what was going on.

"I'm doing entirely too much fiction," said he to Brisbane. "I should let up a while."

"If you do," retorted the Simon Legree of *The Evening Sun*, "you will let up week-ending in Philadelphia. And that is hardly the way to treat your mother. It isn't necessary that all the fiction

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you write appear in the paper. Perhaps your own judgment tells you that."

"I try always to strike a high note," responded the novitiate. "God knows I want to succeed."

"Then you will," said Brisbane. "De Mau-passant, the best interpreter of the short story form of fiction in France, threw away over two hundred manuscripts before he produced one fit to show Flaubert, his master."

"You're putting this whole matter entirely up to me, I take it."

"Hugo burned a trunk of his earlier work for fear his manservant would come upon it unexpectedly and quit him," was the Brisbanian retort. "Dumas got so critical of himself after writing *The Companions of Jehu* that he refrained from reading his previous efforts lest they fill him with regret. Really you've picked quite a job for yourself."

"*I've* picked? *You* picked."

"At all events," continued the taskmaster, "you will be the beneficiary. What are you writing this week in the line of fiction? There is no stopping now. You are the talk of the town. How would it be to finish a story by Friday night and then run down to Philadelphia for two days? Folks will be glad to see you. Tell your mother for me that I think highly of this once-a-week visit to the old homestead."

Rather than trust himself to any sort of a reply

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whatsoever, Richard Harding Davis, the young student of style and plot and narrative, turned on his heel and left the presence of his tormentor.

Brisbane, sure of his man, confident he had not been tilling infertile soil, turned away and laughed inwardly.

The first of the Van Bibber yarns was based on a story that Brisbane translated for Davis from the French out of *Vie Parisienne*. When he wrote "Gallagher," a really great story, it was too long for *The Evening Sun*. Brisbane sent the manuscript to J. Henry Harper and the story was published first in *Harper's Magazine*. Davis, more surprised than any one, said he supposed *Harper's* wanted literature but not newspaper writing, to which Brisbane replied that "literature and newspaper writing might be the same thing." In the end Davis was hired as editor of *Harper's Weekly*.

* * *

That was forty years ago. Twenty years afterward I was talking in the lobby of the Plaza Hotel with that most celebrated novelist and short story writer of his day. Arthur Brisbane, wearing an enormous fur coat and looking very much like a bear, came in and caught sight of the novelist.

"Hello, Dick!" he exclaimed cordially, "I saw

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your mother yesterday in Philadelphia. Says she expects you Sunday."

And for the next five minutes Richard Harding Davis and Arthur Brisbane talked about the old days on *The Evening Sun* when the latter made the former sweat his heart out molding the English language into imperishable fiction.

* * *

"You wouldn't believe that I spent a whole year cursing A. B.," mused Richard Harding, as the editor disappeared in the crowd, "or that I have spent the balance of my life loving him for the part he played in my career."

XXIII

TWO NIGHTS IN A GRAVEYARD BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

THERE is an old song about the "left hind foot of a graveyard rabbit that was shot by the light of the moon." This is a story that began at the witching hour in a Brooklyn cemetery twenty-five years ago, but it has the virtue of being true, while the tragic death of the south-paw cottontail in the lunar setting is mere myth.

* * *

A handful of reporters were seated in the local room of the New York *Journal* waiting for "Good night." Harry K. Chambers, now of the *Literary Digest*, was indulging in his favorite pastime of designing caricatures in the flat dimension with a pair of office shears. Randy Lewis, the man who induced Kipling to come into the moving picture game, and wrote the scenario of "The Light That Failed," was counting up his string of beats at fifteen dollars a column; Bob Adamson and Joe Johnson, two Atlanta boys, each of whom became Fire Commissioner of New York, were rhapsodizing about the old days when Henry

TWO NIGHTS IN A GRAVEYARD

W. Grady was alive and the South was coming into its own. I was tinkering with the double keyboard of an old Caligraph typewriter. Charlie Rich, the night city editor, long since departed, was closing up his schedules and putting the paper to bed.

Into the midst of this tableau of lethargy strolled a dapper young fellow, dressed in the best mode of the period, and requested an interview with the boss. Three men made a gesture toward Rich, who offered the stranger a seat. After fifteen minutes of whispered conversation the night editor wheeled about in his revolving chair, glanced toward each lounge in turn and made a brief summary in an undertone to the visitor.

“Haven’t you got a Western man I can take along?” said the stranger audibly. “Who is that fat party over there taking a fall out of the wheelbarrow?”

“Name’s Davis. Comes from the Pacific coast,” said Rich.

“He’ll do. When do we start? The quicker the better.”

I was called to the desk and received instructions. The dapper person had explained that a gang of gamblers were established in the residence of the keeper of a Brooklyn cemetery; that all the card and wheel games known to Hoyle were being played for high stakes and that the

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leading citizens of Brooklyn were patronizing the place. For the sum of \$1,000 in cash to be paid upon verification he was ready to take a *Journal* reporter into that hotbed of chance and reveal all the scandalous details.

I was equipped with an order on the night cashier for \$250, and with the genial informer hot-footed it up to Herald Square, where a seagoing hack was secured. We crossed on the Long Island ferry, and by 1 o'clock were rolling through a city of tombstones whose owners had played their last card. A gibbous moon shed a sickly light over the scene.

We came finally to a pile of nondescript low buildings through which no single ray of light penetrated. The cabman received a ten spot and was dismissed. After his departure we walked around to an arbor entrance which led to a door with a wicket. Here my friend tapped lightly. A typical bouncer's mug appeared in the soft light; a password was given and we were in.

Not during the palmiest days of Mr. Richard Canfield, that eminent speculator who held forth at Saratoga and in one of the East Forties, had a better assortment of the paraphernalia of chance been assembled. Roulette, baccarat, faro, poker and other games were in full blast. An elaborate collation was served and a bar of the best that could be fermented, distilled and brewed was doing business with Hoffman House service.

TWO NIGHTS IN A GRAVEYARD

I was introduced as the son of Mr. Abbott, a New Orleans cotton broker. The faro dealer at once announced that he knew my father intimately and inquired as to the health of the old gentleman.

"We had a row over the Kentucky Derby," I replied. "I haven't spoken to him for two years. If you don't mind. . . ."

"Beg your pardon. No harm done. Are you sitting in?"

* * *

All that night, the next day and the next night I played my \$250 cautiously, won, lost and won again, quitting with a net of \$380. I also drew a rough plan of the house, got a list of the patrons, an estimate of the money won and lost, and reported back to the office the second day with a bale of memos. The managing editor thought I had about exhausted myself in the preliminary work, and Julian Hawthorne was called in to write the story from my material. He wrote a full-page story while I slept.

Early the next morning my friend the informer and I found the old Herald Square cabman and drove over to the cemetery again just to see what would happen when the first editions of the *Journal* got on the streets with the exposure. We took our positions behind a sarcophagus not a hundred yards from the darkened cottage and waited patiently. About 3 A.M., as the gray dawn was

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breaking, a truck dashed madly into the sleeping landscape, backed up to the casino and a mob of attendants began to heave gambling paraphernalia aboard. The whole place yawned with a great convulsion and a herd of Brooklyn's leading citizens came swarming out like rats deserting a sinking ship, each one spreading the typhus germs of scandal throughout the fair city. Truly a competition between the quick and the dead.

* * *

A year afterward in the cigar store of Mr. Mose Gunst behind the Hotel Imperial, I again met the manager of the cemetery casino and was introduced by Gunst as a former San Francisco newspaper man "now connected with the *New York Journal*."

"Mr. Davis of the *Journal*, eh?" repeated the gambler, scanning me between slit eyes. "The last time I saw this cove he was Mr. Abbott of New Orleans; and what he done—cleaned me and my partner out of \$100,000. To hell with Mr. Davis of the *New York Journal*." Thereupon he bit two inches off a doubloon cigar and left the place. Mr. Gunst was quite shocked; so was I.

The nimble young informer got his \$1,000 as per agreement and lost the entire roll the next night in a crap game. *Sic transit gloria mundi*, which means anywhere between Thirty-fourth and Fifty-ninth streets that "you ain't got it."

XXIV

JOHNSON SIDES WINS A PARDON FOR THE WITCH SLAYER

PREVIOUSLY in *Over My Left Shoulder* I told two stories in which Johnson Sides, the peacemaker of the Piutes, figured conspicuously. Among the red men of the Far West he stands out as a remarkable personage, endowed with courage and great diplomatic gifts. Also he possessed a sense of humor, a quality rarely found among Indians. Geronimo of the Apaches was the cruelest of all Indian leaders. Sitting Bull, the Dakota, possessed the sort of craft and cunning that enabled him to extricate himself from difficulties in warfare. Chief Joseph of the Nez Percé tribe was unquestionably the greatest Indian military genius that ever resisted the United States Government. He led Miles and Howard a 1,500 mile chase that is without parallel in Indian warfare, crossing the cañon of the Yellowstone with all his braves, their squaws and their children without losing a life. Of these figures I shall write in books to come. To-day I return to

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my old friend, Johnson Sides, purveyor of peace and justice.

* * *

Near the town of Winnemucca, Nevada, the Interior Department established an Indian reservation from which the needs of the Indians in the northern section of the state were supplied. All reformed red men who wanted blankets and grub from Uncle Sam were obliged to come in at stated intervals, prove their peaceful inclination and stock up for the winter as a reward. Many of them made their headquarters at Winnemucca, occupying the wooden shacks provided for them, and became civilized.

It was at the reservations that the terrible death-dealing saleratus biscuit was perfected, a food that did more to decimate the noble braves of plain and forest than all the Springfield slugs fired by the United States Army. Buck after buck fell victim to the flying dyspepsia of the hot bun and in due course went into decline. Warriors who at one time could have bitten the hump off a buffalo became addicts to the saleratus curse and went groaning to the happy hunting grounds stricken in their brown bellies.

But civilization had come to stay even at the cost of inherited tenacity. Schools were established, reservation laws enacted, police installed, agriculture was fostered and progress was

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guaranteed. The most difficult problem was the scotching of superstitions, the breaking up of mystery rituals, the elimination of the Indian medicine man. Belief in evil spirits prevailed at that time and still exercises its baneful influence.

One extremely hot summer the mortality among the papooses ran very high. The medicine men held a pow-wow and decided that the death rate was due to the presence of a witch woman, who prior to that time had been regarded as a peaceful squaw, doing the work of four men and minding her own business. However, the edict went forth to the beating of tom-toms and the burning of snakeskins. At a conference held on the Humboldt River ten Indian women were prevailed upon to draw lots and thus decide which of the chosen should enter the witch's tent and take her life.

The next morning an Indian policeman making his rounds came upon a sanguinary scene that sent him hurrying to headquarters with the news that the witch had been slain with an ax. The squaw who had drawn the short straw and been chosen by fate to execute the woman of evil was found in her tent, calmly occupied with her household duties. She made no resistance against arrest and closed her case with the simple statement that she had been selected for the task by the Great Spirit.

She was tried by a white court, convicted and sentenced to life in the state penitentiary at Car-

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son. Johnson Sides, at that time in his seventieth year, made an impassioned plea to the court, begging for a nominal sentence, but the judge deemed it necessary to make an example of her and thus avert similar acts. She entered the prison without the slightest display of regret and became a model inmate. Each succeeding year Johnson Sides appeared before the Board of Pardons and pleaded for her liberty, each time to be turned down. He pointed out that since the witch's death there had been no more epidemics among the children of the tribe. But the Board of Pardons was obdurate.

Coincidentally Senator William M. Stewart had obtained a government appropriation and the Stewart Institute for education of Indians was established a few miles south of the state capital. Teachers were installed and the classes began to fill. A lecture course in history was developed and America's past was revealed in simple terms to the real Americans. Johnson Sides, still pursuing his apparently futile hope, made a pilgrimage from Winnemucca to the Stewart Institute and was present at several lectures, one in particular delivered by Congressman Woodburn that dealt with the history of witchcraft in Salem. He hung around for several days afterward, had a long talk with Woodburn and returned to Winnemucca to wait patiently for the next meeting of the Board of Pardons.

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He was the first petitioner to cross the threshold when the doors were opened. Because of his standing among the red men and the whites he was accorded every courtesy.

"I like to speak again about pardon for witch killer," he began without preamble. "I have to say something for her I have not said before. Will white men listen?"

Judge Murphy, member of the Supreme Court of the state, caught Johnson's eye and replied:

"If you can give us a good reason why we should pardon her we will consider the case again. One good reason, Johnson."

The massive bronze pleader, his face furrowed like the gutted cañons, took a long breath, folded his great arms and answered slowly:

"Long time ago white people in Sal-em have powwow and kill witches; burn-um, hang-um. Many times they do that. Why they do that? Mebbe because, like squaw in Winnemucca, they don't know no better. Do I speak—one—good—reason? I like take her home with me."



The train that puffed out of Carson that night for the Winnemucca Reservation carried two first-class passengers—an Indian woman who had drawn a short straw and the faithful counselor of her own blood who had won her freedom.

XXV

MY SAD EXPERIENCE WHILE PLAYING THE RÔLE OF PENROD

IN my early youth, when, depressed with the responsibilities of life, all seemed sad and dreary, the one book that revived my failing spirit was Dr. Johnson's *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*. It is difficult for me to say whether I was impressed by the excellence of the narrative or overpowered by the fact that the doctor wrote the book to get money enough properly to inter his wife, who lay dead in the next room. Anyhow, I was strong for *Rasselas* and read it often before I became of age.

In later life I found a similar consolation in the adventures of Penrod, that delightful juvenile born of Mr. Booth Tarkington. I cannot come to the belief that Penrod is all fiction. He must have been a composite of Tark's boyhood acquaintances. No imagination could produce such an amazing character without resort to the materials of reality.

Unquestionably there is a slice of Penrod in all boys. In a manner of speaking, I pulled a Penrod when I was in my fourteenth year. For all I know it is a mistake for me to recall the same,

PLAYING THE RÔLE OF PENROD

but a copy of the real *Penrod* bearing the Tarkington hall mark lies on my table and the impulse to let the secret out is strong upon me. The "girl" in the story never knew the part she played.

* * *

By way of preface it must be disclosed to the reader that a certain rich man residing in our town was the father of a very beautiful daughter. She was the Juliet of my callow youth, although I had never been able to summon enough courage to speak to her. At odd intervals I saw her tripping along the tree-lined pavements but, rather than subject myself to the test of coming face to face, I contrived to keep an imaginary appointment on the other side of the block.

The "palace" in which Juliet lived could be seen through the orchard that grew in our yard; not all of the stately pile, but the gables and a small balcony on the second story. One afternoon when the sun was shining brightly I saw her step out on the platform and place her hands on the balustrade. While I stood transfixed, gazing through the trees, I observed her lean forward and toss a cascade of glistening chestnut hair into the sunlit open. It fell like a veil between us, concealing her divine person. Oh, gosh!

For half an hour or more she dried her crowning glory until, caught up by the playful zephyrs, it became a glorious aura framing her maidenly

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beauty. Suddenly she vanished—like a dream interrupted. The time had come. I must act.

Averse as I am to speaking about myself, it must be here recorded that no boy in town could walk as far and as gracefully upon the palms of his hands as *myself*. Aside from that I was a man of initiative. To think was to perform, with me. Hastening into my humble abode I resurrected from a certain hiding place the sum of four and one-half dollars, the hoardings of a lifetime. With that young surplus I hastened downtown to the establishment of Vince Calemberti, the leading confectioner. My alert mind was as clear as a bell. One hundred per cent.

“Mr. Calemberti,” said I smartly, “I want the finest three-pound box of candy you’ve got.”

“One with a ribbon on it?”

“Yes; tied in a bow. Lavender.”

“How much do you want to spend?”

“Here’s four-fifty,” I said, tossing it out.

“I’ll put you up something grand, kid.” And he did just that, and kept the change. I hurried home, hid the box under the bureau and waited for nightfall. At the supper table my brother Bill observed that my appetite was a bit off.

“What’s matter, Bob? Sick?”

With a casual denial I retired to our room and went to bed, filled with secret glee. About 9 o’clock Bill appeared and within ten minutes was fast asleep. Shortly thereafter I climbed stealth-

PLAYING THE RÔLE OF PENROD

ily out of the hay, dressed and passed with my box of candy through the open window.

Arriving at Juliet's castle I walked up and down until 10 o'clock, examining carefully the lay of the land. It was my intention to enter the estate, shin up a pillar to the balcony, place my gift on the balustrade and get back to the street *without leaving a footprint* on the finely graveled path.

The royal family within slumbered behind darkened windows and the moon was hidden by friendly clouds. It was a night for brave and bold men to be abroad. Quietly I opened the gate and placed the box of candy on the edge of the single step which led up from the street.

Being as how I was the champion hand walker at large in that village I took a graceful position on my palms, moved about for a spell and came carefully forward to the step from which the great gift projected. With elaborate pains and juvenile contortions I worked the box by easy stages on to the back of my neck, all the time wobbling about on my hands, until it settled against my shoulders. It lay balanced on the human shelf and was by the acrobatic courtier borne leisurely and safely to the small porch at the foot of the balcony, where the hand-walking marvel tipped it gently forward, after which he assumed an upright position.

Thrilled by the proximity of success, I tied a long cord to the beribboned parcel, took the loose

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end in my teeth and climbed one of the pillars to heaven. Once there, I pulled the box aloft, placed it on the balustrade and returned to earth, where, once again upon the palms of my hands, I proceeded to depart. At the border of the garden I paused with my feet still in the air and picked a posy with my teeth. One little souvenir. There was not a tell-tale footprint of my coming or going.

By 10:30 I was back in bed, and no one the wiser. I could hear Bill breathing softly as he slumbered in ignorance. Why not awaken him and brag a little. Bright idea! He sat up in bed and heard the whole thrilling tale. It stunned him. Thereupon the hand-walking Machiavelli turned over and passed away in pleasant dreams.

Refreshed, the next morning at 8 o'clock I stepped into the orchard and took a look at the balcony. *The candy was gone*, lavender ribbon and all. As I stood there, swelling with the conviction that my princess had accepted the token from her slave, Bill burst from our bedroom door, his arms laced around his treacherous abdomen, and obviously suffering from a surfeit of three pounds of bonbons, caramels, gum drops, chocolates and *glacé* fruits, which he bestowed with loud moans upon the innocent landscape. *Treachery!*

This Penrod never met his princess, nor walked again upon his hands, nor told his brother Bill anything except the time of day.

XXVI

THE KINDLY ACTRESS WHO RECEIVED THE TOTAL STRANGER

TO the best of my recollection the dying nineties belonged to the Golden Age. They are always to be catalogued among the majestic years in which stupendous things occurred, events unforgettable.

During the epoch under consideration I was on the staff of a morning newspaper that numbered among its employees a talented youth from the South. He was an individual of marked ability and personal magnetism. Physically he lacked everything, but so great were his courage and spiritual vitality that only those very close to him knew how frail he was in the flesh. In as much as I shared an apartment with him I knew his weakness and his strength. Ultimately he worked himself into a decline, developed tuberculosis and died.

Coincident with his rapidly developing illness there appeared in the music halls of New York a talented girl who took the town by storm. She possessed an inexhaustible wit and a singing voice of rare quality and freshness. Her portrait ap-

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peared in every twenty-four-sheet stand in Manhattan. She was a success.

One night after the paper had been put to press my friend and I were sauntering along Forty-second street on the way home. He complained of a depression brought on by a fit of coughing and stepped into Jimmy Wakely's place on Sixth avenue, where he took what seemed to be an unnecessarily stiff drink. Alcohol was a stranger to his stomach and worked its evil influence immediately. I pointed out the lateness of the hour and counseled him to retire. He rebelled at first, but finally consented. At Bryant Park his eye fell upon a poster of the music hall favorite.

"I think I know that girl. Met her in Atlanta. Let's call."

"Not at midnight! To-morrow. I will go with you then."

"Nonsense. The performance is over and she's probably home now. Come on," he urged. "I'm all right. She'll be glad to see an old friend. I'll be recognized instantly. She has an apartment along here somewhere in a theatrical hotel." He backed into the street and began to search the signboards. "There it is, down toward Fifth. Leave this all to me. I'll do nothing foolish. I'm a Southerner, so's she. We must call; it is the right thing to do."

I reasoned without avail. He was obsessed with his suggestion and urged me along while expostu-

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lating against my hesitation. Primarily for the reason that it would have been a mistake to forsake him I allowed him to carry out his plan. Opposition would have precipitated a crisis. He was coughing intermittently and an unnatural brilliance shone in his eyes.

My one hope was that the lady would be out. No such luck. The clerk sent up our cards. The artist would be glad to see the gentlemen of the press. We were ushered to her apartment by a sleepy bellboy. On the way up to her suite my sick companion underwent a complete metamorphosis. His manner was that of a prime minister coming to an audience with a ruler.

Our hostess met us at the door, graciously extending a hand to each. I was presented in a most stately manner and described in the most fulsome terms as "a journalist of international eminence." My friend recalled himself to the star and demonstrated his incontestable pleasure at meeting her again under such agreeable circumstances. She was quite overwhelmed at his complimentary references to her beauty and popularity. Never was fair lady more artfully persuaded to the acceptance of an unconventional situation. The only minor note in the whole ceremony was the intermittent and prophetic cough of the sick Richelieu. He talked of music, art, literature, the drama and kindred themes with amazing brilliance, overwhelming his auditors with the profundity of his

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knowledge. He was culture and refinement personified.

The hostess served a dainty supper and ordered the wine card for her Southern knight. He waved it aside with the statement that no stimulant could vie with her vivacity. It was a revelation; a flash of dual personality. We departed at 2 A.M. like ambassadors leaving the presence of a queen whose democracy led her to the door through which we disappeared. My companion sank exhausted against my shoulder as we reached the street.

Somehow or other I got him home and under warm blankets, where he remained for three days. No reference was ever made to the state occasion except one day when he inquired what time we got home from "the festival of friends." A fit of coughing drowned out my reply. I doubt if he ever knew.

In a perfectly natural way it came about that alone I made a party call on the charming hostess of that midnight conclave. I expressed for both of us the gratitude we felt, while she reviewed the details with unfeigned pleasure.

"And will you please understand and pardon me, Mr. Davis, if I ask you in confidence," she said as I was leaving, "Who *was* the little Southerner with the cough?"

"You did not know him?" I asked in amazement.

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"No," said she with much hesitation. "He was an absolute stranger to me. That was our first meeting."

"Yet you received him as an old friend."

"Why not? He was a courtly Southern gentleman. I was honored. Do you suppose he sensed—"

I swept away her fears. "He is still of the belief that you had met and have never forgotten him."

"Nor will I—ever. Please, both of you, come and see me again."

"He has gone South. He may not return."

"Is there anything I can do?"

". . . Nothing."

Many years have elapsed between then and now, during all of which time I have been connected with newspapers and magazines and editorial activities. I have known in a more or less professional way every actor, actress or singer on the American stage, and it has been within my editorial power one time or another to contribute to their publicity either in the written word or pictorially. Even so, the artists of the stage always give to the public more than they receive. With this fact ever in mind I am conscious that perhaps there have been times when I have given a little extra space in the column or a little more width to the picture when it had to deal with Trixie Friganza.

XXVII

A CHAT WITH CALAMITY IN THE SHADOW OF ST. MARK'S

VENICE, October 11, 1925.

IN the upper left-hand corner of the Piazza of St. Mark's, looking toward the cathedral and not very far from the Campanile, stands a marble building the entire front of which is occupied by an enormous clock, fashioned in the sixteenth century. The second and third stories contain the dial, over which is a small balcony supporting a marble statue of the Virgin and Child, before which at stated intervals figures appear, each making a genuflection while passing the Madonna, on either side of which the hours and the minutes are shown in Arabic and Roman numerals. Above the statue is a reproduction of the Lion of St. Mark. The whole structure is surmounted by two massive bronze figures which strike the hours with metal sledge hammers.

Saturated with the gorgeous spectacle all about me and being much interested in the clock itself, I found a seat which gave me an uninterrupted view. The hour was 11:45 A.M. The clock would strike at 12 and the thousands of visitors in the

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Piazza would hear it for the first time. Twelve strokes to come into existence, reverberate and perish.

A tall individual, slightly gray at the temples, dark of eye and keen withal, seated himself beside me, nodding as he took a chair. A thin cloud of what seemed to be little more than mist shed a spray of rain overhead and passed away, leaving in the air a frail rainbow. In an instant it was gone.

"No two persons can see the same rainbow," the stranger said. He spoke very slowly as though to himself. "For each pair of eyes there is a separate curve of color." I threw him an inquisitorial look. He turned then and addressed me directly. "Sunshine through mist reveals the colors of the spectrum. The eye observes those colors at different angles; therefore each beholder sees an entirely separate rainbow from that seen by another beholder. A beautiful phenomenon on the part of nature."

Here was a poet, I thought me. Perhaps if the eye had its individual rights the ear might also hear something for its very self. The clock was about due to chime the hour of high noon, and then from the dark-eyed man I would receive added wisdom. One must travel in this age and generation.

"B-o-n-g!" A flock of bluerock pigeons, receiving the free grain of the visiting pilgrims, rose

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from the square and made a flight overhead. "B-o-n-g!" Another flight began. Twelve strokes of the metal mallets; twelve monster cov-
eys of pigeons weaving the sky only to settle again when the booming notes had died away. The bell in the Campanile answered and the birds refluttered and wheeled and returned again, while all over Venice other bells broke in upon the music of fleeting time.

"No ears in the past have heard this symphony we now hear," I ventured, striving to carry on the conversation in the mood of my new acquaintance. "Our ears alone—"

He turned a sinister pair of eyes upon me; all the poetry had seeped out of him. He seemed to resent my announcement.

"In dealing with time," he answered deliberately, "we approach considerations other than mere sentimentality. Beholding a rainbow is a demonstration of emotional satisfaction. But time is an inexorable fact, and must be regarded as such. Do you mind if I illustrate?"

I had all the time in the world, and waved him to go ahead. In a monotone he piled up his theme with mathematical precision:

"At this moment we are seated in one of the world's most important historical centers. How many millions of people have entered and departed from this square is beyond calculation. People have lived here since the earliest records

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accessible to mankind. The Ducal Palace has been here in some form or other since the ninth century. Its entire significance, that is to say, the period that made it great, lies in the past. The sixty-odd occupants of the Doge's Palace have vanished; all the painters and sculptors and architects are dust. How long their accumulated labors can survive is not the question. An Asian ruler once asked a wise man to utter in one line an imperishable truth. His reply was, 'Even this shall pass away.' The phrase-maker was rewarded with a kingdom."

Fixing his eyes on the clock he paused a moment and continued: "You heard the hour strike twelve. Noon, October 11, 1925. Let us say one hundred thousand people in Venice heard it also. Very well. How many of them will be alive in eighty years? Very few. In ninety years? Perhaps 3 per cent. In ninety-five years? One per cent. One hundred years?" He tossed his thin hands toward the sky.

"How did you happen to get this way?" I asked in the best of faith.

"You don't seem to realize what it means," he retorted, losing his poise for the first time. "It will be the same all over the world. Reflect: In one hundred years not a single individual now alive among the billions on this globe will be in existence. All gone; the entire succeeding population yet unborn. Take a gondola down the

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Grand Canal; what do the gondoliers point out? The palaces of Browning, Byron and Duse. All in the past. It would interest me to know your reactions."

I made no reply to that solicitation. Evidently he mistook my silence for reflection and asked me to express myself frankly. "You have something on your mind. What is it?"

"Well, if you really want to know," I said with reluctance, "John Ringling, the famous American circus man, once told me that the elephant and the tortoise sometimes live to be three and four hundred years old. A century from now some of those old-timers will still be here to enjoy themselves."

The gentleman withdrew without further comment, leaving me steeped in ignorance.

His departure so stunned me that I was short changed by the waiter out of ten lire before I revived and caught up with the fleeting hours.

XXVIII

CURIOUS CONSEQUENCE OF A LECTURE BEFORE THE BLIND

SEVERAL years ago I accepted an invitation to address an audience of six hundred men and women who were residents of an upper West Side home for the blind. The gentleman who sponsored me was particularly anxious that I should talk about certain more or less celebrated persons whom I had "seen."

"Try to present them so that your audience will through your description be able to visualize each character," was his injunction. "Many of your listeners have been blind from birth and see only through their ears. If you are explicit in presenting the physical and intellectual characteristics of those whom you elect to discuss the result will be extremely gratifying and you will find sympathetic interest."

The platform from which I delivered my rambling discourse was about twenty feet square and was built up about a foot from the floor. It contained a chair, one small table upon which rested a pitcher of water, and a grand piano, the lid of

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which was raised. The room was practically square and the acoustics excellent. Mindful of my instructions, I left nothing to the imagination of my hearers. There was no attempt at forensic magnificence, no grandiloquent terms whatever. Each individual selected by me was presented through a prefatory paragraph of description.

In the beginning of my remarks I felt a fine sense of security in that I was not to be examined with a critical eye. Most of us who have the audacity to appear in public are self-conscious because of the fact that we are under inspection. Only the old-timers, hardened to ocular examination, are completely at ease. My audience was there, but they saw not. I opened boldly, but as the program progressed I began to feel ill at ease.

Eventually it dawned upon me that while six hundred pairs of eyes were bent in my direction I was unable to win one glance of recognition, approval or encouragement. Automatically, a public speaker, after locating a receptive auditor, addresses himself to that particular intelligence and lets himself go. As he warms up another listener betrays comprehension and the circle of support widens. Gradually the infection spreads and the windjammer is "in touch" to the finish. He feels that he has caught on. What he has really caught are responsive glances.

The dew of desperation gathered on my brow.

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Finally in self-defense I turned to the master of ceremonies for relief. He was beaming to his eyebrows. At last an oasis in the desert. He made a gesture of assurance that I was still among friends and encouraged me to proceed.

Returning to the fray, I poured personalities into that sea of sightless faces for all I was worth. In my attempts at description I revealed that among all the persons of distinction I had known, Roosevelt had the finest set of teeth and the most energy in speech; Grover Cleveland was the most composed in manner; William McKinley was the gentlest; Speaker Reed was the most cynical and Speaker Cannon the dryest; Senator Beveridge had the most fire, Senator Root the most logic and J. Ham. Lewis the most assurance, Brisbane the most information; Zane Grey had the most penetrating and blackest eyes and Bob Fitzsimmons the bluest; that O. Henry had the best-shaped head and the kindest expression and Bill Muldoon the grandest manner; that Joseph Conrad planned his stories in Polish, talked them in French and wrote them in English; that because of long exposure to the winds of the sea the skin on his face resembled dried buckskin and that his eyes when he was in an introspective mood appeared to be concave instead of convex; that Owen Davis wrote in longhand and had produced 207 plays in American theaters; that Irvin Cobb could write an original story and carry on an extraneous

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conversation simultaneously; that from the song or note of any bird in the American ornithology he could name the species; that Montague Glass and Rupert Hughes are accomplished pianists; that Thomas Edison, deaf to human speech, can detect the slightest discord in the music of machinery.

In the midst of these remarks my auditors began to ask pointed and interesting questions. The variety of the queries indicated an inordinate thirst for information. The result was gratifying in that it broke down the barrier and brought about an animated and mutual understanding. The absence of one of the senses accentuates the sensitiveness of those remaining. Somehow the blind can "see from within."

Before leaving the platform I took occasion to inquire of the audience just how I seemed to be to them. "Visualize me and let me hear the description," I asked. There was a moment of silence, interrupted by a middle-aged woman who sat in the second row, perhaps ten feet from where I stood. Her face was turned directly toward me, a face alert with sensitive definition.

"If you desire," she said, "I should like very much to say how I think you look and to explain my conclusions if you are interested. You are a heavy man, inclined to nervousness. . . . You spoke extemporaneously. . . . You do not make gestures, nor do you move about when you talk.

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. . . You are sensitive to your surroundings . . . wear rubber heels and have but recently come from the barber shop. That is all I can see.”

A ripple of hand clapping ran through the auditors.

“The description is almost perfect,” I replied. “Can you explain the method of your deduction?”

“Easily,” she said with confidence. “When you passed to the platform I could not hear your footsteps, but I felt the floor shake—heavy man on rubber heels. There was no rattle of note-paper: extemporaneous. Gestures alter the tempo of the voice; you talked evenly but rapidly at first. Afterward you spoke more deliberately; you were nervous, sensitive. All the time you were speaking you leaned against the piano. I could hear the slight reverberations from the strings; heard it all through: you were stationary. For a short time a faint aroma of bay rum reached my nostrils and then faded: the barber shop. That is how I see you—through my ears and my nostrils.”

* * *

I left that delightful company with the conviction that the Lord will and does provide.

XXIX

THE MESSENGER BOY MONOPOLY BETWEEN NEW YORK AND LONDON

THE cables inform us that District Messenger Daniel Rudge of London has returned from America to his native land. Dan came over here last month to deliver some gramophone records—all in the day's work. He discovered that our girls wore too much paint and powder but admitted that they were pretty; that the American male was smart but did not dress smartly; that during the daytime there was nothing doing in New York. But after dark! Oh, boy! Daniel was a bright lad but unfortunately he is just twenty-eight years behind William Thomas Jaggers, the first London district messenger to cross the Atlantic professionally, set foot upon American soil and return to England, there to collect his fee.

Jaggers was selected for that now famous trip by Richard Harding Davis to deliver three letters, one in New York, one in Philadelphia and one in Chicago. It was a great stunt in publicity and the

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American novelist got his money's worth out of it.
So did I.

* * *

The day prior to the arrival of the liner *St. Paul*, March 18, 1899, M. W. Rayens, manager of our own American district messenger service, phoned me that the London messenger would be in his office at 195 Broadway the next morning and that I might have an exclusive interview.

Lord Jaggers was a self-confident nipper and, like all visiting Englishmen, full of comment, having appraised America while coming up from quarantine. There was none of the cockney about him and he had all his h's under perfect control.

"I shall very well like to see more of the country," he said, "and walk on a bit of land. How far is it to Chickago?" Rayens explained all of those details. "I have a message for a lady on Pi-rary avenue," volunteered Jaggers.

That would probably be to Miss Cecil Clark, I thought me, whom Richard Harding Davis was then courting and whom he married the following April. In view of the fact that I was paying assiduous attention to a young lady residing on that same Prairie avenue, whom I had the good fortune to wed the following September, I dickered with Mr. Jaggers on the basis of a five spot to deliver a message for me when he had finished his mission for Richard Harding Davis.

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"It is odd, sir," observed the boy, "that your name is Davis same as his. Any relation?"

"Not near enough to do the other Mr. Davis any particular good," I admitted. "Truth is, Jaggers, we are not related at all."

I wrote the note and the young Briton placed it snugly in his dispatch box after folding the five and laying it among some other currency. "I'll deliver it; no fear. Thank you, sir," said he, grinning.

Jaggers then went on about the business of delivering his New York message and at 1 o'clock caught the train for Chicago. He beat the regular European mail to that point by a lead of three hours, a jolt from which the United States Post Office Department was a long time recovering. A Congressman, exerting his North American privilege, got up on his hind feet in Washington and wanted for to know why "this boy flew on swifter wings than Uncle Sam." He received what is known everywhere as the horse laugh.

In due course, after a lionizing trip to Chicago, Jaggers returned to New York with a letter for Richard Harding Davis and a letter for me. I imagine both epistles contained the same general information touching on and appertaining to the immediate romantic interests of the Davis boys.

Flushed with the simplicity of the Chicago experiment in messenger service I conceived the

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idea of drafting the excellent Jaggers to send a message to Mr. Tod Sloan, who was at that time riding winners in England for the Marquis of Beresford. Our American jockey was housed at the Savoy Hotel in London, smoking long cigars and patronizing the nobility. When I broached the subject to Jaggers he beamed all over and confessed that he regarded Tod as the most distinguished foreigner who had ever set foot on English soil.

"I couldn't take a fee for that, sir," was his comment, and he stood by his guns with true British stubbornness. "To hand him the message will be enough. Righto!"

My note to Tod was a mere paragraph congratulating him on his winning mounts, with a request that he cable me inside dope on the next Derby.

Had it been a message addressed to the King, Jaggers could not have felt greater responsibility.

I sealed it and wrote in the lower left-hand corner: "From R. H. Davis, New York. U. S. A."

Jaggers held the envelope in his hand a moment, scratched his tousled head and said: "Lord love me. Here's another message from the other Mr. R. H. Davis."

Tod Sloan answered my note ten years later by word of mouth, but his tip on the Derby winner was all wrong. As for Jaggers, he did his share

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toward giving Richard Harding Davis and myself a brief monopoly on his services as an international, trans-Atlantic dispatch bearer.

* * *

Long after, when I came to know him, I told the novelist of the liberties I had taken with his English messenger boy, explaining that the billet-doux to Chicago came under the head of love and war, but that the note to Tod Sloan was based on the theory that the Davis family must never cease its hold upon the lines of communication.

"That's reasonable," he replied. "Now let's see who got the better of it. You received a love letter from your intended and a wrong steer on the Derby from Tod Sloan. Call that a draw. Total cost five dollars, and no returns. My bill was nearer five hundred—"

"For which you got \$100,000 worth of publicity," I ventured.

"By Jove, I never thought of that," he answered lightly. "R. H., you're a mathematician. One other thing, my boy: Whenever you have any letters to deliver and you come across a messenger of mine moving in the same direction, use him to your heart's content. Remember also that there is something in a name. Take your own for example. . . ."

XXX

THE MAN WHO DIED THE DEATH OF THE EIGHTEENTH AMENDMENT

SIXTEEN years ago a young Irishman bearing a letter from a friend came to me in search of employment. He was one of the finest specimens of physical manhood I had ever seen; 6 feet 2, weighing 170 pounds, with brown curly hair and perfect teeth. Partly at his suggestion, and for the reason that the salary was \$75 a week, I got him a job as a trial horse with a well-known boxer who was training for a championship fight.

For three weeks he received a generous mauling at the hands of the professional fighter and gave satisfactory service. From the fringe of the prize ring he stepped into the railroad business as a brakeman on the upper West Side tracks of the New York Central. Sober, industrious and on the road to prosperity, he married a young Irish girl from Connecticut. The couple settled down and two sons were born to them. I saw him once or twice after our first meeting and talked with him about his family. He had high ideals about bringing up his children in the country of his adoption and looked forward to the opportunities in store for himself and for them.

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A hiatus of ten years followed, in which sight and record of him were entirely lost. I then learned by accident that he had left the railroad and gone into the business of delivering bootleg liquor to an élite clientele for some "gentlemen higher up." The stuff was brought to the patrons' home in automobiles. He had "refined customers" and "guaranteed protection." He was putting cash in the bank.

"Pretty soft for him," said my informant. "No risk whatever and meets the best people. He's there because he's honest and will keep his mouth shut. The people he is working for think a lot of him. If anything breaks not a peep from him."

* * *

Six weeks ago a woman living in a Harlem tene-ment house received a telephone message announcing that her husband was ill in a speakeasy. "Come and get him," said a husky voice. She hastened to the address given but was denied admission. Persisting in her rights, she was finally escorted into a den of vapors. On the floor lay her husband utterly unconscious. Two men, nervously sympathetic, lifted the stricken man into a taxicab and he was taken home and put in bed. A doctor was called and some funds were left with the wife. There was a great air of mystery about the whole proceeding.

For three days the giant frame lay dormant on

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the hot sheets, but failed to respond to heroic treatment and tender nursing. On the morning of the fourth day the parched lips trembled and the weary eyelids lifted, though the dull orbs saw nothing. The whole expression of the face took on a vast vacancy from which the light of consciousness had faded completely. The once powerful hands lay open and listless. The wife, bending over the inert form, strove with voice and ministrations to rouse the sleeper from his exhausting dream. There was no response. She summoned the three children (a girl had come to them) in the hope that they would revive the father, awaken a flash of memory. He did not know them. A panic crept into the desolated group about the bedside; a dread and nameless fear gripped them.

Suddenly the eyes lighted, the hands plucked at the blanket and the dry lips began to speak brokenly in a high monotone and heard by the wife and children.

“Money you make this way is cursed. . . . I know it is. . . . It was a mistake and somebody must pay. . . . All wrong, all bad. . . . Don’t touch it. . . . You’ll be dragged down and you can’t get back. . . . I told them I wanted to quit. . . . They told me to go on. . . . Now, boys, listen to me. . . . Stop in time. . . . Go away from this money, stay away from it. . . . Get back your old job. . . . You can’t win if you go on. . . . I

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know and I tell you it's cursed. What's that?"

There was an interval of uncertainty as he groped for words. Evidently the "gentlemen higher up" had entered the temple of memory. The speaker turned his head to another quarter of the room and continued:

"Yes, sir . . . I know all about that. . . . You can trust me. . . . I never squealed in my life. . . . Yes, sir, I'll remember. . . . Not a word. . . . Not me."

He turned back to his first phantom audience and lifting his trembling hands exclaimed hurriedly:

"Stop it, stop it! . . . Now! They'll get you! I'm all through. . . . Bad business. . . . Stinks."

The doctor called often and exhausted his medical skill to relieve the patient. The "good Samaritans" from the speakeasy tiptoed in, left more funds and tiptoed out with deepening concern upon their faces.

The sick man muttered through five weeks of awful reflections, never once recovering his mind. He told everything he had lived and suffered, but no name escaped from the pale lips. The words thickened and broke, his speech becoming more and more incoherent. Streaks of gray crept into the brown hair. The body wasted, the cheeks fell into great hollows, the massive bones showed through his almost transparent body. Specialists

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were called. They shook their heads in the dingy hallways as they departed.

Toward the end of the sixth week the skeleton summoned his last breath:

"Let it alone. . . . You are lost. . . . I'll never . . . squeal." And with his remaining vitality he uttered the cry that has long been heard in Ireland: *"Curses on all informers!"*

His secret died with him.

* * *

How extraordinary it is that lawbreakers meet so little difficulty in finding men they can trust!

XXXI

A HALF HOUR'S CHAT WITH AN O. HENRY PRIZE WINNER

“**W**HAT do novelists talk about?” is a question frequently asked by the laity.

Occasionally they talk about themselves, or now and then their publishers. In isolated instances they can be induced to discuss their royalties or their film successes. Once in a while they talk about other authors. And many of them talk well. There are times when an author forgets himself and talks about something else. Then the conversation is worth recording.

* * *

Edison Marshall, the Oregon novelist, is in New York to see about the publication of his newest western novel, *The Deadfall*. He asked advice concerning the Aquarium at the Battery as a place of interest, and also what I thought about the American Museum of Natural History.

“Why should you,” I asked, “who have caught every sort of fish that swims in the rivers and the sea and shot the Kadiak bear, the largest carnivorous mammal in the world, throw your time

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away with captured and stuffed creatures on Manhattan?"

Mr. Marshall, wholly forgetting his professional standing, ignored himself and at once became interesting.

"Up in the Selkirk Range, speaking of bears, lives a guide by the name of Dean Cochran. As a matter of fact he comes as near to being a naturalist as one could be without the degree. His specialty is the grizzly, a much more disagreeable critter than the Kadiak of Alaska. When the grizzly is struck by a bullet, unless killed immediately, he sets up a terrible commotion—howls, rages and rips things up like a mad dog. He's a wicked brute in action and has the temper and the manners of the devil. Not so with the Kadiak, who makes no outcry, rarely loses his composure, no matter how badly wounded, and waits for death with a fortitude and a dignity found only among mankind.

"The grizzly hibernates in winter, but he does not go into this mysterious trance until starvation forces him to do so. He hangs around in hope of one concluding gluttony, a farewell orgy. One terrible fall when the snow had completely buried the earth and the hibernation season was at hand Cochran erected a platform in some pine trees and set beneath it the carcass of a moose. His object was to lure a certain hoary old grizzly to the banquet and secure a series of photographs

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against the white snow showing bruin at the last supper before closing the season.

“The salmon had all gone down to the sea, the moose and the deer into the valleys and the smaller game into hiding. The hungry grizzly was the last rounder abroad, hoping for a last meal. About noon he caught the scent of the dead moose and came cautiously through the deep snow toward the bait. Cochran, tingling with ecstasy at the prospect of priceless photographs and confident that he was about to witness an important event, remained still as death. Onward came the grizzly with slavering lips.

“Playfully a soft fall zephyr came through the trees and wafted to the sensitive nostrils of the arriving grizzly the smell of the human animal. The bear stopped, rose to his haunches and began to sniff the air. The beady eyes found the common enemy, the thing that lay between the grizzly and his gluttonous impulses. He weighed his longing for meat against his fear of the man aloft. He was repulsed and invited at one and the same moment. The sleep of satiety against the sleep of death. Was it worth the gamble? For half an hour, sniffing and bristling, the bear stood flat footed in the snow and weighed the problem. Cochran did not move. All of a sudden the bear came to a decision. He lifted his snout into the air, raised his front paws to his massive cheek bones and gave forth a long-drawn note that

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was a cross between a wail and a cry of agony.

“Unlike any other sound Cochran ever heard from a grizzly, it was clear as a trumpet and rang through the timber, echoing and reëchoing. It was a blast of regret and rage and grief and farewell. From his upright position he dropped to all fours, plunged down the slope to the cañon and immediately disappeared into his black den, there to hibernate the winter through, with regretful dreams. He did not reappear until the following May. Cochran lost the opportunity to take photographs, but he is perhaps the only white man who ever heard a grizzly bear blow the trumpet of retreat.”

I asked Marshall how it happened that he won the O. Henry short story prize in 1921 with “The Heart of Little Shikara,” a story that was laid in India and dealt with a tiger hunt in a country about which the author knew little or nothing.

“Animals are pretty much alike the world over,” he replied, and then wandered off into another realm of natural history.

“After all, nature seems to have worked out her problems with amazing intelligence,” he said, “and is far ahead of us mortals in ingenuity. During the war man invented the smoke screen, the electric wire fence, camouflage, subways and poison gas. Well, the devilfish emits a cloud of ink and becomes invisible, the electric eel shocks its enemies, the chameleon becomes a perfect

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camouflage at will, the gopher is the king of subway builders and the polecat produces a gas that gives him the right of way against all other beasts. All traffic laws are off at his approach. And there are dozens of other illustrations. Nature is supreme."

Not from him but from another I learned that at the remotest western point of the American mainland—that is to say, the Alaskan peninsula, which touches a meridian west of the Hawaiian Islands—he killed a Kadiak bear whose body measured more than nine feet from the tip of his nose to the tail, weighed two thousand pounds and under the tape showed eighteen inches on the pads of his hind feet. The green pelt weighed one hundred pounds plus. Truly this man has had adventure in the animal kingdom. His black, straight hair, his dark, penetrating eyes, his alert movements, all suggest that he might have been born in the forest or come out of Kipling's *Jungle Book*. I asked him from whom he took his first name.

"When I was born, thirty years ago," he answered, blushing like any other author, "my father was deeply interested in two of the world's great electrical wizards, Edison and Tesla. Because of that admiration I was named Edison Tesla Marshall."

And that was all I succeeded in getting the winner of an O. Henry prize to say about himself.

XXXII

THE CONTAGION OF LUNACY THAT FOLLOWS A GOLD STRIKE

WEEPAAH, the new Nevada mining boom town, has had its share of space in the columns of the daily papers. The two fortunate youths who turned up the yellow metal in a badger hole have spread the gold fever. Numerous unsuccessful business men from all over the United States are arriving in Weepah on every train. Nevada, with her usual hospitality, is extending the glad hand to the fortune seekers. The past performances of that state as a treasure box of precious metal justify the hope of future riches, and the advent of spring will find Weepah the pulsing headquarters of undying hope. All mining booms are identical in the particular that 90 per cent of the rumors are bogus and 90 per cent of the participants are boobs.

News of a rich strike travels on the wings of the wind, gathering velocity as it flies. It rides like the hot sirocco from the desert, warming the atmosphere to the shorn lamb. The clerk, the staid business man, the husband, the wage earner

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and the old-timer breathe deep of its mulled agreeability and are swept into the parade of intoxicated lunatics. Few of the marchers in the procession have any conception of the stark landscape that lies at the foot of the rainbow in their eyes. The golden glamour that shines from afar dissipates at the end of the journey and the mirage fades from the sky line of anticipation. Mark Twain once in jest said that "a mine is a hole in the ground whose owner is a liar."

At that time a sort of madness had come upon the men who went up and down the earth in search of precious metal. Mining camps sprang up along the whole range of the Western mountains clear down into Mexico, and Arizona, Nevada, California, Utah and Colorado heaved in the travail of their golden fecundity. Cities grew up above shafts and tunnels. Quartz mills thundered on hillsides that a year before served as pastures to mountain sheep. Rivers that had slaked the thirst of wild game became power plants to work the gold and silver into ingots to enrich the world. Railroads threw spurs into the cañons, roads were opened, civilization conquered the disorder and the new country was born.

There were forty years of hectic progress on a metallic basis. A few men became fabulously rich, but the mother lodes were stripped and the placers ravished and the low-grade ores reduced to slag heaps. The reaction came, the mines petered, the

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golden flood subsided and the maniacs in motley flowed back into the valleys and took up other occupations. It was a gorgeous adventure, even for those who failed, the hundreds of thousands who had suffered every hardship; for those who had eaten their own saddles, baked in the sun, drunk the blood of their pack mules, fought to protect their claims, tasted riches and lost them; for those who were maimed and broken, spurned and defeated, tricked by false hopes, smashed at the wheel. But they were men of courage and vision, and to them belongs the credit of riding the barrier of the high hills and breaking the trails that pierced the mountain passes. And yet every year of the great penetration the plains and the broad valleys of the Union produced crops and cattle aggregating in the value the total output of all the mines in the world.

But there is no romance, no adventure, to a field of grain rippling in the summer breeze, no alluring prospect of sudden riches about a sweep of alfalfa or a sea of clover. The scythe and the hoe were cast aside for the pick and the shovel. The water that afterward was turned upon the thirsty earth was impounded and run over the riffles in the sluice boxes to catch the fleeting gold dust for posterity.

That was a generation of delirium, an era of rapacity, from which many a man returned with less of everything, save experience, than he took

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in. Behind them are the ghost cities, the dismantled, rusting works, the gaping holes in the mountains, the defaced hills hydraulicked into fragments and ripped asunder. With the passing of the precious hoard came the death of the camp and the reign of silence; that sensate element which vanishes with defeat must have something other than quiet to exist upon. Voices and strained breathing and blows and anger, and laughter and greed, and thirst and hunger, and the sweat of men and the sighs of women, and the mania for possession are the ingredients that survive. Uppermost is self, the overlord.

In 1895 I joined a gold rush to a camp known as Pinenut in Douglas county, Nevada. It bloomed overnight and became a hysterical rush from all quarters of the state. It seemed almost as though a wave of insanity had possessed the people. Ten square miles of low, rolling, sage-covered hills were located in a week's time. The ore in some claims ran to eight hundred dollars a ton, and every location was protected by armed men. In the midst of the drama a miner died. The body was taken down to the bed of a dry creek, in which a shallow grave had been dug. The District Recorder, with certain *ex officio* powers, was performing the last rites.

"We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out," he intoned from the Book of Common Prayer. *"The Lord*

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gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." He reached down and picked up a handful of earth. "*Ashes to ashes. . . .*" The gravel fell from his outstretched hand and rattled upon the rude coffin. "*Dust to. . . .*"

A sudden transformation came over his face. His eyes took on a strange glitter. The next instant he cast the prayer book from him, drew a six-shooter in either hand and commanded the mourners to remove the remains elsewhere.

"Everybody git off the premises!" He had caught the flash of gold in the handful of gravel. "This is mineral bearing land. I claim everything 600 feet north and south and 1,500 feet east and west from this grave. Git out!"

He stood in the center of his legal possession and the unwelcome company backed away.

Pinenut Camp came to an untimely end in less than a month and the ghoul who "jumped" the first cemetery never made a dollar out of his claim.

The deceased was reinterred elsewhere, the only man in all that mad mob of maniacs who remained behind, though in a shallow prospect not of his own selection.

XXXIII

JOHN L. SULLIVAN'S WILD NEPHEW WHO "TOOK TO MUSIC ONCE"

UP to the day Theodore Roosevelt galloped away on the Long Trail this was his favorite story. It was the yarn that entertained all classes, from foreign ambassadors down to plain citizens who had but one vote. Whenever T. R. told it he allowed himself an introductory of loud laughter, which lifted its crescendo up to the high spot, at which pinnacle the Rough Rider lay back in his chair and to all intents and purposes collapsed. The tale had its genesis twenty years ago. I first heard it from Colonel Roosevelt's own lips in Oyster Bay a month or two before his death. And now, curious as it may seem, after all these years the sequel comes into my hands from one of the principals.

* * *

In 1907, during the second intervention of the United States in Cuba, a general court-martial was convened at Camp Columbia for the trial of military offenders. A West Point second lieutenant was detailed as counsel for the accused in all cases brought before the court.

JOHN L. SULLIVAN'S WILD NEPHEW

Several months after the advocate had been relieved of the business of defending his accused clients he received from Washington a bundle of official documents, which upon examination proved to be a mass of "indorsements" in the conventional style of those stirring days. After diligent search through the bureaucratic flap-doodle he arrived finally at the basic communication, which was nothing less than a masterpiece of English composition from that prince of stylists, John L. Sullivan, late of Boston, Massachusetts, U. S. A.

The letter stated with a fluency not often found in war documents that John's favorite nephew, son of his beloved sister, had been made the victim of cruel and inhuman treatment at the hands of United States Army officers, all because of some trifling breach of the infernal and pinheaded regulations; that the patriotic boy had been dragged before a general court-martial and made to suffer the utmost humiliation.

John went on to say with superhuman restraint that the disgrace which this proceeding heaped upon the family of Sullivan was more than flesh could bear. He closed with a demand that the outrageous injustice inflicted upon his kinsman be rectified and that disciplinary action be taken against the wretches who had condemned him under the A. W. O. L. clause in the Manual of Courts-Martial. John L.'s epistle blazed with

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the statement that but for the "lack of zeal" on the part of his nephew's counsel the dire calamity could have been averted.

The letter was addressed to Theodore Roosevelt and closed reminding T. R. of the many happy times they had spent together: "The good old days back at Harvard. Yours truly, John L. Sullivan." The letter contained a marginal note by the President calling for further particulars.

It was this *dossier* of desperate details that now came to the hand of the counsel for the accused with a request for explanation. It had gone through the President's secretary, the Secretary of War, Chief of Staff, Adjutant-General, back and forth, up and down, in and out of the infinite mazes of the War Department down to the Commanding General of the Army in Cuba, arriving finally in the trembling hands of the ill-fated second lieutenant with the umpty-ump indorsement directing him to explain the alleged "lack of zeal" that had brought the honor of the Sullivans to the dust.

The second lieutenant replied by calling attention to the record of the trial, showing that the person referred to in the basic communication had been legally tried and found guilty, and that his counsel had, as such, fully discharged all the duties required of him by the Manual of Courts-Martial. The Sullivan sensation ended there and

JOHN L. SULLIVAN'S WILD NEPHEW

the documents went back into the files of the War Department.

* * *

The next scene shows a café in New York, 1919, with the second lieutenant, who had escaped being shot, seated with several companions, one of whom, a former assistant secretary to Roosevelt, was telling stories about the old days when T. R. was in Washington.

"The greatest laugh-maker that ever came into the White House," he said, "was the John L. Sullivan letter demanding justice for his nephew, who got into trouble with the War Department. The document was addressed to the President and made out an elaborate case. In the midst of reading it Roosevelt let out a whoop of laughter and almost had a choking spell. He was quite unable to speak, but pointed to a paragraph among others defending the nephew, which read:

" 'The boy was always a little wild. *He even took to music once.*'

"He had to leave his chair and go to a window for air. I never saw a man so convulsed with laughter. Every day for the next month he told it to all his visitors. When he reached the climax the effect was ever the same. Mrs. Roosevelt had to listen to that story many times and finally began to be actually sorry for John L.'s nephew. She was really anxious about the boy's rehabilita-

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tion. T. R. set some sort of machinery in motion and went after some army officers, whose indifference, according to John L., was responsible for his nephew's trouble, but I don't know what came of it. Anyhow, it made the President laugh every time he told it up to the end of his career."

"I can tell you what happened," said one of the guests at the table. "The findings of the court-martial were sustained and John L. Sullivan's nephew took his medicine like a man."

"Are you sure?" asked the assistant secretary."

"Absolutely sure," was the confident response. "I was the counsel for the accused in the trial of Mr. Sullivan's nephew and lost the case for him."

"Ha!" exclaimed the secretary. "I am going right over to Oyster Bay and tell Mrs. Roosevelt that I've found the officer whose 'lack of zeal' got John L. Sullivan's nephew in Dutch with the army."

XXXIV

THE GOLD STAMPEDE BROUGHT ON BY "THE LADY OF LYONS"

THERE is nothing so dead as a defunct mining camp, nor nothing so vital as one that has been revived. I have seen several Golcondas expire, and one at least come back to life. No spectacle can possibly compare with the mad rush of frenzied men on the spoor of the golden calf.

While still in my teens I lived in a section of Nevada that at one time was rich in placer and quartz mines. Millions had been taken from its hills and valleys and many a grub-staked prospector had gone forth to return with wealth beyond the well-known dreams of avarice. Gradually the diggings gave out and the people settled down to the homely occupations of agriculture and lumbering. The Comstock, Silver City, Dayton, Como, Washoe City, Kings Canyon and the river placers had all petered. Apparently there was little more than a trace of precious metal left. Nevertheless, a few dreamers plied their picks and pans and courted Midas.

One afternoon, when only the flies were buzzing

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around and the town was practically asleep, a character known as Dick the Drifter appeared at Mark Livingston's saloon in Carson with a buckskin sack of gold nuggets. These he spilled upon the bar and invited inspection. The golden flood rippled over the mahogany shimmering like sunlight. Instantly the habitués roused from their lethargy, swarmed about the prospector and clamored for information. The Drifter, deaf to all importunities, purchased a liberal supply of liquor for all comers. The news of his presence spread throughout the town and the populace began to show signs of unrest. Dick lost no time in becoming properly stewed and led a mob of worshipers along the street from bar to bar. He emptied his store of wealth into the throats of his admirers and finally wound up fast asleep and busted in front of Martin Downey's undertaking shop. Kindly citizens, seeking to gather some whisper from the mute lips of the sleeper, stood guard over him, but the Drifter remained speechless.

Toward morning the guard dwindled away and Dick disappeared. Search was made for him, but he had vanished completely. Old prospectors became insane with anxiety as to his whereabouts and sought his trail in all directions. Three times within the month he reappeared, his buckskin purse bulging with riches, each time to totter into some sequestered spot and sleep off his jag.

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All attempts to follow him into the mountains failed utterly. He lost his pursuers as the hare escapes the hounds and gave out no more information than the Sphinx. The populace went wild with envy. Something had to be done before the Drifter drank himself to death and died with his secret.

When the excitement was at its height there appeared an itinerant theatrical troupe offering in repertoire "The Lights o' London," "Neck and Neck," "The Shadows of a Great City," "The Lady of Lyons," etc. The leading man, one Richard Foote, made an instantaneous mash on the citizens, male and female, and to him were given the keys of the city. In the midst of the festivities and on the night that "The Lady of Lyons" was to be presented, Dick the Drifter loomed up heavy with gold dust and loaded for beer. He was especially happy and announced his intention of taking in the show. In the hope that under the spell of the drama he might let fall valuable data as to the whereabouts of his Eldorado, numerous first-nighters offered to sit with him.

When the curtain went up there sat the Drifter in a stage box of Moore and Parker's Opera House, safely packed in with a dozen of his warmest admirers. Some of them had their arms around him, and all his pockets were stuffed with presentation cigars. An ectoplasm of jealousy

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emanated from the stifling group, but the Drifter played no favorites. His mind was on the gaudy Claude in laces and tights and Pauline in silks and satins.

During the action of the play there is a scene in which Claude importunes Pauline to fly with him to one of his numerous palaces, there to reign as his queen. Under the spell of Bulwer-Lytton's noble lines, full of poetic beauty, Dick the Drifter leaned from the imperial box and began to heave gold dust on the stage.

He tossed kisses to Pauline, shaking off his devoted and congested comrades the better to add the sign language to his speech.

"Wait a minute, lady. Let me tell you sompin'."

The moment had arrived; the Drifter was about to spill his beans. Every pair of ears in the audience yawned to receive the priceless communication. Claude Melnotte disengaged his arm from the frail beauty and fixed his flaming black eyes on the rich interrupter. Dick quailed and sank back in the waiting arms of his cronies. A gust of resentment swept the audience. The dialogue went on.

PAULINE: Sweet prince, tell me again of thy palace by the Lake of Como. (Business of the Drifter reviving with energy at the word Como.)

MELNOTTE: . . . a deep vale shut out by Alpine hills from the rude world, near a clear lake mar-

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gined by fruits of gold and whispering myrtles . . . of cooling foliage musical with birds whose songs shall syllable thy name.

PAULINE: My own dear love.

The Drifter shook off his retinue and stood up unsteadily.

“One moment, dearie. Just one moment,” he pleaded, shaking his forefinger at the entranced Pauline. “He’s a damned liar. They ain’t a bird or a flower or any water in Como. I just come from there. Tell him to go to hell.”

With that suggestion he tossed the remainder of his gold dust on the stage and collapsed.

The secret was on the air. Pandemonium! Moore and Parker’s Opera House groaned under the shock. The orchestra of three pieces quit their instruments; all of the guests in the royal box and 90 per cent of the audience broke, pell mell, for the exits and tore up the seats getting out. Strong men clawed their way down the aisles, hell-bent for Como, thirty miles away. The opera house was emptied in three minutes and Dick the Drifter was left hanging over the rail of his box like a dishrag. Horses, buckboards, mules and wagons, drafted in the mad rush, hit the trail.

The next morning fifteen hundred Carsonites were in Como, most of them gathered around a recently worked pocket from which Dick the Drifter had plundered the last gold dust. Only that and nothing more.

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Dick died within the month. "The Lady of Lyons" and Claude Melnotte moved on to other fields with their repertoire.

The boom was busted.

Como had petered out for all time.

XXXV

QUEST OF THE GOLDEN DRAM UNDER THE AURORA BOREALIS

IT was like this. In the year 1594 Barents, the great Dutch explorer, after whom Barents Sea was named, became entangled in an ice floe off the coast of Spitzbergen. The two ships he was using became separated and the one which Barents commanded was navigated down the east coast of Nova Zembla. At Ice Haven she was frozen in. June 14, 1597, an attempt was made to get out. The commander and four of the crew perished and the remainder were picked up at Lapland and saved. Before departing from Ice Haven the explorer cached his stores, certain records and observations and nine bottles of rum, each bottle bearing a label authenticating the tippie. These essential details serve as a text for the story which culminated 310 years later at Cape Flora, Franz Josef Land, under the cold and starry sky.

* * *

“Quite naturally you ask what became of that priceless distillation.” It was our host who was

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speaking (1927) to a group seated at his table. "A perfectly reasonable question. Let me jump from 1594 to 1894, a matter of three hundred years. This brings us to the yacht *Iris* of the Leigh Smith expedition, which in that year sailed down the east coast of Nova Zembla to Barents' camp at Ice Haven. Polar bears had been the only visitors since the Barents party had left, therefore the nine bottles of rum were intact.

"Smith, being an Englishman, was a stickler for the unwritten laws that protect one explorer's cache from the hand of another except in extremity. The temptation to annex the nine bottles of rum was strong indeed, but he thwarted the crew by issuing an order that two bottles, for medicinal purposes only, be taken, both of which were placed in the custody of the ship's doctor. The fact that the former owners of the Barents rum had not called for the cache in three hundred years had no bearing upon its violability. The men of the sea respect its traditions.

"The *Iris* then sailed to Franz Josef Land, where she was nipped in the ice at Cape Flora and went down immediately. The doctor got the medicine chest ashore, where the party spent the winter in a sad shack on the tundra, covered by a sail from the *Iris*. The next spring they left everything behind them, got away in a whaleboat and reached England. The place was visited by Russians from the ice breaker *Ermack*, who de-

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molished the hut. The medicine chest had filled with water and was frozen over so that when the cover was torn away a cake of ice decorated with a few harmless corks was revealed."

"Is this going to be a long story?" spoke up a gentleman suffering from the anxiety complex.

"My dear boy," replied the narrator, "as this tale consumed over three hundred years in the making, I solicit five minutes more in which to reach the climax."

"That's a long time to me; but keep going," answered the interrupter, touching a napkin to his lips.

"We now come to the Ziegler expedition which set out under Anthony Fiala in 1903 for the north pole. In the summer of 1904, having lost their ship at Teplitz Bay the winter before, they came south to Cape Flora to await the arrival of their relief ship. They remained there all winter. The following spring, when the ice melted out, a few torn pages from the *Iris* doctor's diary were found. They contained an account of the finding of the Barents rum and a notation to the effect that a four-ounce bottle had been held out as a thrill for a London friend. Considerable excitement ensued but there was doubt as to whether or not the tale could be substantiated. In any case it was agreed that the issue was important enough to merit careful investigation. Among those interested was the ship's physician and a French

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Canadian by the name of Pierre Le Roya, an able seaman who, without impugning his patriotic esteem for his native land, claimed to be from Missouri and wished to be shown.

“These two blocked off the Smith headquarters and went methodically to work. Eventually, when it seemed that all hope was lost, they located the ship’s medicine chest. The only safe way to get the bottles out was through the application of water. A small stream rising in the tundra from the melting snow was turned into a course and the icebound bottles were one at a time extracted from the clutch of eternal winter. Most of the vials had burst, but there was one small bottle, intact and sealed with red wax; a bottle that contained a light golden liquid and which bore the immortal phrase:

BARENTS RUM

FOUR OUNCES

A deathlike silence pervaded the room as the speaker ceased talking. The party with the napkin wiped his lips again. They gave forth the sound of something being sandpapered. “Three hundred and ten years,” he murmured. “Then what?”

“The four ounces were equally divided. The high content of alcohol had prevented the rum from freezing and kept it in a liquid state. Pierre Le Roya and his friend drank it on the spot.”

QUEST OF THE GOLDEN DRAM

“Three hundred and—”

The man with the napkin caught himself. “And what did it taste like—I wonder?”

“Marvelous!” was the electrical announcement.

“How do you know it was marvelous?” demanded one of the guests, peeved slightly.

“Because,” said our host, confident of his might, “that 310-year-old slug of Barents rum was *split equally between Pierre Le Roy and myself.*”

“Let me be the first to congratulate you!” cried the man with the napkin, seizing the hand of his host. It was a touching tribute from a sincere admirer.

* * *

I heard this story from the now justly celebrated lips of Dr. John C. Vaughan, to-day a practicing surgeon in New York, but in 1903-1905 the physician on the *America*, in which the Ziegler expedition sailed the Arctic seas.

I even touched his hand.

XXXVI

JAMES G. FAIR'S ODD INTRODUCTION TO HELENA MODJESKA

THE great Polish actress made her American début in San Francisco in "Adrienne Lecouvreur" in 1877. No single Pacific coast event was more significant than the acclamation of Modjeska. At about that time Virginia City, Nevada, was in the midst of its amazing productivity in gold and silver bullion. The stock market was booming and paupers were becoming capitalists over night. The fame of the talented Helena penetrated to the distant hills and a delegation of leading citizens from the Comstock repaired to San Francisco and invited her to play a week of repertoire in the city of the golden glamour. A fat bonus of twenty-four carat legal tender was bestowed and the arrangements completed.

Her reception was a tempest. After every act as Modjeska came before the curtain a shower of gold coin of every denomination rained upon the stage from all quarters of the house. The receipts in the form of flying fortune exceeded the

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receipts at the box office. Modjeska was fêted by the municipality and courted by every Crœsus. Hers was a week of triumph.

At the conclusion of the engagement she expressed a desire to make a tour of the Savage mine, which penetrated two thousand feet into the heart of Mount Davidson and ramified here and there along veins of fabulous wealth. To my own brother fell the delightful responsibility of escorting Modjeska into the dark and dripping underworld.

It must be understood that all visitors to the Comstock mines were obliged to cast aside sartorial splendor and assume a garb of overalls, hob-nailed boots, tarpaulin coats and the hats of seamen. Beauteous women and dignified men are all one as the cage, suspended from a spider web of steel, descends into the dripping mine. The whole tour from level to level is a soaking excursion in water and mud. From the moment the cable begins to slip from the sheaves until the jaunt is over there is no turning back. Winches, shafts, tunnels and drifts comprise the itinerary. Modjeska took the saturation like a major.

On the 1,500 foot level the cage stopped and the passengers stepped off into a tunnel that led to an inner chamber, heavily timbered and provided with every luxury possible underground. In the shadows of the passage stood a sturdy, heavy, tarpaulined individual bearing a lantern.

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His beard was dank with moisture and his face was half concealed under the visor of his hat.

"Madame Modjeska," said the star's conductor, "let me present Mr. Fair."

The name meant nothing to the actress, who knew little of local history, but the Midas master of the mine itself, the celebrated Jim Fair of New York, Paris and London, lifted his lantern and saw revealed the delicate features of the Polish star. He made a profound bow, offered his arm to the celebrated visitor and escorted her to the chamber of plenty, where refreshments were served with a lavish hand while champagne corks were released in the flickering lantern light. The great unknown took charge of the party and made Modjeska his special charge.

"What a delightful miner," she whispered to my brother. "Who is he?"

"One of the bosses here. Does about as he pleases. We'll let him come along with us," was the reply.

"But the champagne and the collation?"

"All the miners drink wine. I didn't think much of the lunch. But he meant well. Of course he knows who you are and is spreading himself."

The millionaire escorted Modjeska into forbidden territory and let her gaze enraptured upon the precious hoard of quartz shot with gold and silver. The tour became a pageant through the caves of mystery.

HELENA MODJESKA

At the two thousand foot level the party again entered the cage and the signal to ascend was given by the owner of the mine himself. Arriving at the surface Modjeska assumed the garb of civilization and upon the arm of my brother was preparing to depart.

"Tell me," she said, "would that miner be offended if I offered a gratuity?"

"Not at all," he replied. "But not too much, madame; just a little souvenir."

Helena walked over to the multimillionaire, who was still dressed in his underground costume. "I am much indebted for your kindness," she said in exquisite modulation, holding out her hand, which the Senator accepted with a low salaam. As Modjeska withdrew her delicate fingers from the clutch of the capitalist she left a five dollar gold piece where it ostensibly belonged.

Fair, petrified with astonishment, stood as one overcome by a shock, gazing alternately from the tip to the tipper and back again. Modjeska, obviously disturbed, returned to her escort, accepted his arm, remarking as they walked away: "Mr. Fair seemed surprised. I hope he isn't offended."

"How much did you give him?"

"A five dollar gold piece."

"My dear Madame Modjeska! Pardon me, but that is a large tip, the largest he ever received. A dollar would have been quite enough. His amaze-

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ment was due to the proportions of the fee, not to your performance.”

“I am quite relieved,” said she, “but am sure he’ll find use for it.”

At the mouth of the Savage stood Senator James G. Fair, looking down at the first gold coin that had ever been bestowed upon him for being polite to a stranger.

* * *

Many years afterward, when he was a guest at the home of Madame Modjeska in the Forests of Arden, California, she brought him with her own hands a glass of wine. He drank her health and placed a five dollar gold piece on the service tray with the remark that it was given him by “a lady who was far beneath her station when she met him.” He had kept the tip during all the intervening years and expressed the hope that she would tip him again with a feeling of equality.

After a few days the coin was returned to the Senator with this inscription:

TO

JAMES G. FAIR, ESQ.

FROM

HELENA MODJESKA

AS YOU LIKE IT

XXXVII

A PROCESSION OF PRAYER TO A MELODY MIRACULOUS

PERUGIA, Italy, September 9, 1926.

STILL under the influence of a subtle spell as the first pale couriers of the breaking dawn appear over the hilltops of the Apennines I write these lines. Delay would dim the memory of the spectacle and mar the beauty of the scenes which for the last few hours have passed before my eyes in a procession of accumulating grandeur.

* * *

Motoring with Leo Ditrichstein from Florence to Perugia, ancient capital of the province of Umbria, we drop into the valley of the Tiber and discern in the distance the walled city. Its Etruscan barricades, scaled by the Romans in 310 B. C. and still frowning against the azure sky, are rent and crumbling, but Perugia, housing 40,000 souls, still stands 1,600 feet aloft, overlooking the fertile country of the foothills.

From terrace to terrace we rise along the ser-

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entine highway, arriving at the abrupt spiral that terminates at the Piazza d'Armi. A protesting hand is lifted. We halt. The citizen has much to communicate. His explanation is impassioned and mixed with movement. "The First Congress Eucharistico of the diocese of Perugia is in session. . . . The procession magnificent of 110 parishes is about to begin. . . . The faithful hosts will proceed with solemn music through the city of the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, assembling finally at the Piazza d'Armi, there to receive communion from the hands of Cardinal La Fontaine, Patriarch of Venice. . . . The gates of the city at this point are closed. . . . Proceed to the north. . . . Much sympatico."

We perform, we parley, we plead. *We are admitted*, the last car for the day. Onward up the highway, swinging into an avenue of red and gold, of banners of festoons and of draperies flung from open windows, of paper lanterns swaying aloft from cornices, arches and towers. The highways are flanked with spectators, all in high spirits, all thrilled with the approaching ceremony, perfect order prevailing. Nothing is sold or distributed; the hawkers have disappeared. An agreeable hush has fallen upon Perugia. Our car, in low gear, climbing slowly, is the last echo under the blue sky in the crystal clear breathless atmosphere of pitiless heat.

From our fourth-story window in the hotel

A PROCESSION OF PRAYER

we command three points of the compass. The pageant is scheduled to start at 2:30. Below us, in the winding, narrow thoroughfares, groups of marchers from the numerous parishes are clustered like gayly colored restless bouquets. Laces, veils, embroidered silks and satins, costumes of varying shades, banners with legends, all waiting for the signal that will inaugurate the weaving of the loose strands into the procession of braided color creeping slowly upward and onward to San Lorenzo, stately for five centuries, though still externally unfinished. Two popes, Urban IV and Martin IV, who passed in the latter half of the thirteenth century, sleep in its left transept.

Far away strains of music emerge from the valley of silence. The echoes rise and fall and swell and die away and recur again. Suddenly a carillon of bells in staccato clamor exultation; tongues of iron begin to strike thunderous notes from bronze chimes in cathedral spires. The booming of brass is everywhere. The scene becomes animated. The architectural solidarity, the mellow, time-softened outlines of marble and sandstone construction melt into movement. Through the gaps in the rambling streets the whole pageant is beginning to flow. Bands, a hundred or more, each playing a different sacred selection, vie with the chimes. The throbbing bell of San Domenico in the lower section of the city answers at intervals the sonorous note of San Lorenzo on the

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heights. There is no discord. The symphony is on so vast a scale that the reverberations penetrate the very vault of heaven and are softened to the harmonies sought by every ear.

Ten thousand voices of boys and girls in church costumes are lifted along a procession two miles in length, quite beyond the control of central direction, yet blending with the bells and the bands and the intonations of the faithful. The priests, the nuns, the acolytes, the novitiates, the parishioners, the children, the musicians, the bearers of the honorifics, all move with solemn dignity.

Countless images of the Savior in gold and silver, bronze, marble and ivory are borne aloft in richly embroidered baldachins swaying to the measure of leaderless orchestration. By 5:30 more than fifty thousand marchers have passed a given point. Forty thousand are transient pilgrims. Of the grand total, most of whom have come into the city from the province, at least fifteen thousand are entering Perugia for the first time. They have come in wonderment and hesitation and are scaling as in a dream the walls of this modern Carcassonne.

* * *

By midnight the tide of humanity that had reached its crest at sundown, and partaken of communion, broke into colorful spray and began to flow back to the countryside. As water fol-

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lowing the courses downward the current moved, rippling, splashing and tumbling into the valley of the Tiber, where it murmured away into the night.

The oil torches flaming like medieval beacons from the towers, parapets and scarps of San Domenico flared fitfully and one by one went out. The feeble candles in the tissue lanterns gave up their fires; the red and gold streamers hung from casements became colorless blotches in the field of darkness. Perugia was preparing to close its doors.

At 2 A.M., not an hour ago, Ditrichstein and I walked over the route trod by the pilgrims up to the very portals of San Lorenzo. On the stone steps we found asleep a solitary peasant with his back against the great architectural masterpiece, a marble column sixty feet high, for a pillow. In his calloused hand lay a sheet of sacred music, a fragment of the miraculous chorus. Thus the last worshiper to leave the cathedral had paused to rest in the sanctuary of its shadow.

“What a marvelous demonstration of faith we have witnessed to-day,” said my actor companion. “All the art of the theater, all the stage direction from the beginning of the drama are dross in the presence of this night and that sleeping figure with his lines still in his hand.”

XXXVIII

GOLDEN PHRASES THAT THE ACID OF ERROR CANNOT TARNISH

OCCASIONALLY I receive a letter from some kindly critic who points out to me that I have made an error in some date or name or statement. Always these letters are couched in the friendliest terms and are obviously inspired by the best motives. Therefore I wish it known that they are appreciated. On the other hand, I want to make the fact clear that I never posed as a statistician. The sole object I have in tampering with a pen is to record certain phases of human emotion and details of life that have in the last forty years come under my observation. There are lots of mistakes and inaccuracies that creep into my output, but I do not propose to be dissuaded by minor details. If I miscalculate the number of cove oysters in Chesapeake Bay or split an infinitive open so that it bleeds to death I apologize and will try to do better; but the day I get three letters to the effect that I am a bore the business of authorship comes to an abrupt end.

Now, therefore, with this preamble I want to call attention to several exquisite brain children

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that have from time to time come under my eye. All are the offspring of master minds. In quoting them I aim only to convey the meaning they impart to me. I have sought to verify them in Bartlett and other books of quotations, but they are not there.

What Persian was it, if it was a Persian, who said:

“The thing we most fear never happens”?

That line alone has enabled me to pass through more storms and tribulations than any other seven words in existence. I never saw it in print. Probably I have misquoted, but the meaning is there to stay.

* * *

Robert G. Ingersoll told me that the most exquisite phrase he had ever read was from an Oriental poet who, describing the ascension into heaven of a beloved ruler, used these words:

“The eaglet of the soul of [I’ve forgotten the name] shook from his plumage the dust of his body.”

The illustrious infidel placed that sentence at the top of his preferred list, but I have not since been able to locate its author.

* * *

Ernest Haskell, the etcher, once asked me what single sentence encountered in my reading had

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made the most profound impression on me. I quoted from Rousseau:

“The dead take to their graves in their clutched fingers only that which they have given away.”

“You’ve got it wrong,” said he. *“‘The dead hold to their breasts in their clutched fingers—’”*

Neither of us could relocate the sentence. Perhaps we were both wrong. Take your choice.

* * *

A year ago I met in the wilds of Canada on the shores of Lake MacGregor an American army officer. He was a master of narrative and a most engaging conversationalist. His speech was leavened by the Southern strain and when interested his eyes fairly danced to the tempo of his words. He had read all the books worth while and referred to authors ancient and modern that are not on the list of best sellers. He discussed the finer things with no suggestion of superiority.

I will say for him, however, that when he turned his attention to the rougher aspects of existence, to the rude, hard facts of life and the speech of the barracks he was a first-class army man from upper to lower lip. In the midst of a volcanic eruption he would suddenly change his manner as though to escape from further outbreak and begin to talk of some distant land. His voice would

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change, his gorge would recede and the art of the eloquent story teller would take command.

On one occasion I saw him pick up a gasoline engine upon which he had been tinkering for six hours without making any headway and heave it sixty feet into the lake. Before the infernal thing struck the water he sat down quietly and spoke as follows:

“About ten years ago I was on leave, making a lazy journey through Japan. I met up with an old gentleman similarly occupied. We used to take long walks together over the hills. He appeared to be about seventy, heavily built, with long hair, snow white. He had retired from business a wealthy man, had been everywhere and seen everything. He was from one of our Southern states and would get intensely wrought up over something that interested him and talk with glowing eloquence and striking dramatic effect.

“One day while we were on one of our rambles he stopped suddenly and began a long narrative of a journey, or rather pilgrimage, he had made to an ancient Chinese temple. He had to travel three days by camel to reach it. In front of the ruins was a tablet bearing an inscription in archaic characters which his guide and companion, who was a learned Chinese scholar, was able after much labor to translate. The legend was in two parts.

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“On one side this:

HEALTH	LOVE
FOOD	LIBERTY
SHELTER	LABOR
THE FOUNDATION OF ALL HUMAN	
HAPPINESS	

“On the other side this:

RULER	PRIEST
OFFICER	MERCHANT
PRISONER	PAUPER
ALL ARE THE SAME MAN	

“Maybe you have heard of this tablet, but I have never known any remote reference to it except from the old man that day on the slopes of Fujiyama.”

* * *

“*My spear knows no brother,*” once quoted by Roosevelt, is not to be found in any collection.

Words are elusive things.

XXXIX

TALES OF THE GOLDEN DAYS WHEN THE BIG BONANZA BOOMED

NEWS comes from Virginia City, Nevada, that the great gold and silver mines which poured ninety million dollars a year into the lap of the Government during the Civil War have nothing more to surrender of treasure and will close down. Thus Mount Davidson, lifting its dome nine thousand feet above sea level, becomes at last the tomb of America's Golconda. The heart of the great hill, into which shafts, drifts, tunnels, stopes and winzes were made by money-hungry mortals, has ceased to beat and the golden flood from its mighty arteries is no more.

Virginia, once a city of thirty thousand souls and the capital of a thousand belching smokestacks, lies exhausted upon the slope, her fires drawn, her thundering machinery stilled, her engines red with rust. The timbers of the Consolidated, Crown Point, Savage, Alta Best and Belcher are rotting in three thousand feet of pitch darkness, the silence broken only by the drip, drip, drip of accumulating moisture. The scars made

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by men will with the centuries heal, but the legends, songs and stories of the Comstock Lode will survive for all time.

Mackay, Fair, Flood and O'Brien, the Big Four who ruled in that kingdom, have passed away, but the influence they wielded from that distant Sierra throne ramifies to-day unto the uttermost corners of the earth. The human equation is beyond obliteration and while human speech and memory and the written word exist the old Comstock will be food for tongues.

Let me recall the story of the rise and fall of Warren Sheffield, Beau Brummel, Cræsus, stock broker, tipster, pauper. He was one of the few living men who outjockeyed the crafty James G. Fair in a stock deal. When Virginia City was at its zenith Warren was the glass of fashion, the broadcloth prince of the night life, the Aladdin who rubbed the lamp and brought largess out of the air. When he turned a card it was an ace; when he played the wheel thirty-five to one was his portion. His most casual remark sent a ripple of laughter throughout the town. He snubbed the great with one gesture and reinstated them with the next. Millionaires treated him as a patron. But Icarus flew once too often into the sun and fell back singed for all time and beyond repair.

Maimed by ill luck and broken in spirit, he stopped Jim Fair on the street and asked for the

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loan of ten thousand dollars. "I may want to buy a little lunch."

"Wouldn't it be better if you took a job and worked up an appetite first?" said the Senator. "We need miners in the Crown Point."

"I've always wanted to be on your pay roll, Jim," answered Sheffield, much to the astonishment of the bystanders and also of Mr. Fair. The next morning he appeared at the shaft of the Crown Point in miner's garb and took the cage for the depths. Being skilled in mineralogy he was made a subforeman in a rich drift.

On the third day, while examining a newly uncovered quartz ledge, Warren suddenly let out a terrifying scream and, falling in the arms of a neighboring miner, began to froth at the mouth, his body contorting violently. After a few moments of incredible torture he sank to the floor of the drift and became rigid. The frothing at the lips continued and he was carried to the shaft and sent aloft on a fast cage. His personal physician was called and Warren was removed to a place of quiet in the emergency ward, where the doctor took the case himself.

"Epilepsy," said the M. D. "Nothing serious. Be all right in a moment. Just leave him with me."

Doctor and patient emerged in a few minutes and the latter insisted upon going back to work.

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His courage was highly praised and his yearning to labor was gratified.

The next morning there was a sensational boom in the stock of the Crown Point mine, the shares jumping from \$16 to \$38.50 before noon. A lot of pikers who were not regarded seriously in the speculative market were somehow or other loaded with Crown Point stock and cleaned up. The outsiders were in on the ground floor and the insiders were not. Fair's brokers had to do a lot of explaining to the old guard. The mine owner himself was quite upset.

A month of quiet followed, and Warren recovered his health. Everybody praised him for his brave efforts at honest toil, Mr. Fair even complimenting him. As a reward he transferred Warren to the Consolidated, where the underground temperature was more agreeable. Everything went along swimmingly until one morning the diamond drill brought out on the 1,200 foot level a core of gold-bearing quartz that went \$82 a ton. Warren Sheffield caught one flash of the ore with his practical eye and laid his plans accordingly.

The next day Consolidated stock, which had been long in the doldrums, opened sluggishly and several thousand shares were picked up through different brokers and in small lots. The trading continued without attracting any particular attention. There was something in the wind but the

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fireworks were not quite ready. Warren put in five hard days while the shift of miners went on the trail of the diamond drill. At last, arriving in the region of the ledge, they put in a blast. It shook down the real thing in high-grade ore.

Before the outside world had any information whatever Mr. Warren Sheffield was throwing the most remarkable fit ever staged in any country. He frothed like a beer keg and did some of the greatest contortion stunts witnessed up to that time. The Consolidated foreman became terrified at the spectacle and rushed the frothing, moaning Warren aloft in person. The stricken miner revived at the mouth of the shaft long enough to send for his old medical adviser, who arrived in jig time.

"Everybody out. Give him air," shouted the physician, taking the case over. "He'll be all right in a minute."

"Doc," said the pallid Mr. Sheffield, after the room was cleared, "that ore will go over three hundred a ton and the ledge is four feet wide and runs from the roof to the floor of the shaft, and no telling how deep it goes. It's another Bonanza. Gimme something to take the taste out of my mouth and then you light out to the stock brokers and load up on Consolidated. I've eaten my last hunk of shaving soap and from now on nothing but champagne froths at my lips. Epilepsy!

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Pooh! It's Jim Fair's turn to have the next spasm."

* * *

Sheffield and his alert old family physician cleaned up over \$200,000 with that cake of shaving soap, but Warren never got the taste of it out of his throat.

Jim Fair issued orders throughout the Lode that Mr. Warren Sheffield, "in view of his delicate constitution" and his predilection for throwing fits and fainting at critical moments, be laid off indefinitely.

XL

THE YEAR OF THE GREAT PIE TORNADO IN CALIFORNIA

I CELEBRATED the noble institution of Thanksgiving at the table of a family that prides itself on the excellence of its New England cooking. After the salad the overweighted host clambered to his feet and said:

“You are about to receive the benediction of a perfect homemade pie, a classic combination that is without peer in these United States. After you have come into possession of this wonderful fabrication you can take an oath that you never before tasted, or even saw, a pie.”

An excellent introduction to a mince masterpiece.

* * *

In the year of our Lord 1889, while examining into the climatic conditions of southern California, I drifted into a prosperous village and took a job as type sticker on a country weekly. Prior to my coming the editor had started a competition open to the whole countryside to settle for all time the question as to which woman

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in the district was the champion pie compiler. Cash and annual subscriptions were to serve as prizes for the winners; the judges to be the employees of the paper. Being from New England stock, and versed in the intricacies of the art of scientific pie inspection, I became a member of the judicial body in whose hands and on whose palates lay the destiny of the competitors.

Lordly indeed was the procession of pie molders that began to file in Monday morning. From every quarter of the quiet village, magnetized by the hope of reward and a thirst for fame, came housewives, daughters, husbands, small boys and servants transporting concrete testimony of their claims to eminence. Stately dames, comprising the élite of the commonwealth, appeared upon the main street bearing on the flat of their palms pies that could not be intrusted to lesser hands. All comers were received by the editor in person and each pie was numbered upon its arrival. The pageant moved in upon us up to noon. Every desk, chair, shelf and type rack was commandeered to receive and sustain the entries.

Pumpkin, apple, peach, blackberry, mince, pear, apricot, custard, raisin, lemon, cream, sweet potato, quince, blueberry, pies with open faces, pies with lattice work, deep dish pies, pies with decorations, frostings, landscape gardening, initials and fresco designs; pies with monograms and pies with paste came floating in until the shop

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looked like a collection of miniature towers of Babel shedding shortened crust everywhere. Late in the afternoon the suburban competitors began to show up in buckboards, buggies, hay wagons, bicycles, horseback and on the hoof.

By nightfall there wasn't a spot in the office where a printer could sit down and stick type, or a desk where one could write a line of copy. Five hundred and thirty-one handmade pies piled up in a country print shop is worse than ten men in one duck blind. The sweet, sticky effluvia common to bakeries permeated the building. Our office boy, unable to restrain his intemperate appetite had pilfered a squash, a lemon and a cream pie, souvenirs of which clung to his face and shirt front. We locked him up in the woodshed to avert a scandal.

At 6 P. M. the competition closed and all belated entrants were turned away. Much criticism ensued, but we were obliged to hold to the previously printed rules and regulations. One of the tardy contestants became abusive and was invited to leave the premises. He did so, but being a man of invention and having no further use for the pie, hurled it through an open window into the face of the foreman. Charlie Chaplin never received such a testimonial of custard in all his screen career. The pie struck while still in the plate, burst into a golden corona and felled the fearless foreman to the floor.

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Just for that we locked the doors and went into secret session to discuss ways and means to pick the winners, clean out the mess and get back to the legitimate occupation of journalism. From an all night livery stable around the corner we prevailed upon three husky hostlers to sit in and express themselves as to the quality of five hundred-odd pies languishing for expert verdicts. By working in shifts and under oath of secrecy we sampled over three hundred seemingly first-class pies in five days and set two hundred-odd aside as practically out of the running. Three of the judges broke down completely and went into a sort of dyspeptic coma. A fourth who had applied himself to the mince pie entries took to singing snatches of folklore songs in several languages. His case was pitiful.

Into the midst of the chaos there came on the fourth evening from a neighboring township an honest granger who wanted some first-hand information.

"Name's Summerhays," he announced. "Daughter Nettie sent a New England apple pie Monday morning to the competition. Had her initials, N. S., onto it. Any news?"

"That pie," said the editor, "is among the specials selected for early judgment. Drop around in the morning and we'll have some real information for you."

Nettie's parent swept his eyes over the collec-

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tion of whole, mutilated and fragmentary pies that littered the sanctum and left the premises with a bewildered look.

The committee on awards hustled around the shop in search of the "N. S." entry, but found no sign of it. In the meantime Pa Summerhays had stepped around the corner into the Sundown Café to get himself a square meal.

"We have," announced the waiter, "a fine line of pies here. We serves 'em whole and the guest helps himself. All you can eat for a quarter."

"Bring me the best pie in the pantry," said the granger, retucking his napkin for the coming course, "and I'll let you know where you get off as pie makers."

* * *

You've guessed it. The hash slinger brought Nettie's pie, bearing the initials "N. S." Father left his seat taking the whole pie, hurried out of the Sundown Café and walked around the corner to the newspaper office. Wreck, denunciation and attempt at manslaughter ensued. Proprietors, printers and pie experts were seen climbing out of every window in the building.

The printer's devil, who had sold a gross of pies to the Sundown Café at a dollar a dozen, vanished in the confusion and took up sheep herding, an occupation which allows one plenty of time to contemplate the past.

XLI

WHEN BOB FITZSIMMONS "CRASHED THE GATE" AT NEWPORT

JACK DEMPSEY was the first pugilist to achieve the state of a prize-ring millionaire. Gene Tunney is unquestionably the one fast man on his feet who is a close student of the works of Epictetus, and Paul Berlenbach is the last word in filial devotion. Those facts are milestones in ring history. .

The late Bob Fitzsimmons, however, was the first and only exponent of the manly art to "crash the gate" at Newport and mingle on terms of social equality with the élite. I was an eye witness to his entry.

* * *

When Fitz wrested the championship from Corbett in Carson City, Nevada, in 1897, I escorted the victor to the battle ground and brought him back to New York for a New York newspaper. Living at his training quarters I came to know the Australian fairly well. In my recent book *Ruby Robert, Alias Bob Fitzsimmons*, which I intended should cover that part of his life outside the prize ring, I utterly forgot the Newport trip

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upon which I accompanied him twenty-nine years ago last September. The time has come to impart some of the details that did not then get into print.

In order to make the most of the publicity feature of the trip from Manhattan to Newport we traveled by daylight, arriving about dusk at the Hotel Leyland. Bob scrawled his well-known name upon the register and we were shown a suite on the second floor overlooking an autumnal grove. Rapidly a collection of local sports gathered on the lawn for a glimpse of the champion. While Bob was in the midst of an athletic effort to put a proper knot into a white tie, a calling card bearing the name of James W. Gerard was brought to our apartment.

"Who's he?" asked Robert, battling with his finery.

"One of the best," I answered, and instructed the bellhop to ask him up. The gentleman who afterward became our Ambassador to Germany soon made formal entrance and was by me introduced. Mr. Gerard brought all his diplomatic gifts into play and took Fitzsimmons by storm. So swiftly was the *entente cordiale* established that within a short time the great visiting heavyweight found himself the guest of honor at a sumptuous banquet served in the noble dining room of the Leyland. The invitation list was augmented by numerous young bloods who broke

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all previous engagements in order to attend. There was standing room only in the numerous hallways and Mr. Gerard was looked upon as the person who had "put one over."

After the coffee a reception was held in the lobby, where Bob with easy grace crushed all extended hands with true warmth, playing no favorites. In the midst of the gayety Mr. Gerard whispered to his guest: "Just had Senator Depew on the phone. He wants you to drop in at his cottage to-morrow morning at 10. I'll call this affair off for the night. You get to bed and be up at 9 to-morrow morning."

We finally escaped and promptly at midnight Ruby Robert, the Lion of Newport, clad in his old-fashioned one piece nightgown, turned off the gas with his powerful and professional right hand. Thus the windows were darkened as a signal to the yap half of Newport that the king had retired. One by one the faithful fans left the lawn—and so to the hay.

On the morrow, Sunday, to be exact, Senator Depew, then as now in full possession of his jocular powers, arose from a comfortable rocking chair on his Newport veranda and greeted his caller, Mr. Robert Fitzsimmons, who came upon the arm of Mr. James W. Gerard. The formalities of the technical sort were dispensed with. Bob sank into a soft spot on a large divan, his plug hat beside him.

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"They tell me, Mr. Fitzsimmons," began Chauncey in his happiest vein, "that you have more power in your right hand than has the entire Supreme Court."

"I think my left is the best," replied the champion, throwing up his guard in a figurative sense, "but I certainly did 'it Peter Maher a stiff belt with my right at Corpus Christi."

"I heard it in New York," retorted the Senator, more or less satisfied with the comeback. "Is this your first visit to Newport?"

"The first so far," said Bob. "I was thinking about buying a summer 'ome 'ere."

"About how much did you figure on investing?" asked Mr. Depew with real solicitude.

"Wot is the asking price for that 'ouse on the corner down there?" pointing to a colonial structure backed by a formal park.

Mr. Depew went into a coma of reflection and finally decided that it might be had on easy terms. "Oh, let us say three million; one million down and the rest in equal payments over a period of—"

Fitz brushed his plug hat off the divan to hide his confusion and got up and sat down twice. The tension was broken by the arrival of a tall, blond young man who came to the veranda from within the house. The newcomer was introduced by Mr. Gerard as Cornelius Vanderbilt. The Senator called him "Neely" and insisted that he feel the powerful biceps of the visitor, who was

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glad indeed to shift from real estate to physical culture.

"Gee!" was the observation of young Vanderbilt, who as one hypnotized continued to run his lithe hands over the magnificent upper body of the complacent champion. The thing that interested him most was the exact whereabouts of the devastating wallop that won the championship.

"It's only a matter of knowin' 'ow," was Bob's broad enlightening comment.

We left the Depew cottage in time to meet John Jacob Astor coming home from church. He stopped long enough to shake the hand that shook Corbett and to cast a critical eye on the freckled right. We spent the balance of the day with Mr. Gerard hobnobbing with the great and the near great. Fitz carried himself with dignity and was a delight to his host, whom he never forgot and whom he always admired.

In the midst of our packing to get away that evening Bob exclaimed: "Call up Mr. Depew and say that I don't want to buy that 'ouse. I was only kiddin' 'im."

* * *

Ruby Robert went to his grave totally unaware of the fact that one requires something more than a fast right and a stiff left hook to "kid" Chauncey Depew.

XLII

THE ONE GREAT ROMANCE OF MY CHECKERED CAREER

RECENTLY in the exchange room of *The Sun* I came upon a copy of a paper from the Western state in which I spent most of my boyhood. Mechanically I slid a finger down the frail wrapper and unfolded the treasure-trove. The news columns were wholly devoid of a single suggestion that might recall the past. The advertisements awakened no memories. I turned at last to the births and deaths.

Among those who had been touched by the wing of the Dark Angel I came upon her name; the girl who first awakened in my youthful breast the great yearning. For her I had designed my first palace in the air, a structure that tottered in the night and crushed me in its ruins. All these years I have kept the secret of that accursed hour which lost me her love.

* * *

Her name was Nell. We met at a country dance and by the grace of Heaven I prevailed upon her

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to participate with me in a halting polka. The celestial strains of the music wrung from a four-piece orchestra still echo in my ears. She was grace itself and floated in my hungry arms like a will-o'-the-wisp, her dark hair emitting the perfume of Eros.

"To-morrow I shall write you," I said.

"What will you say?"

"That I am coming to see you Saturday night at your farm. There I shall tell you—"

"No. You must not. Father objects to boys calling on his daughters." She blushed and disengaged herself from my arms as the music ceased.

"Do you object?" I touched her soft hand lightly.

"No," she replied in a scarcely audible whisper. "But you cannot come in the house. I must see you outside, if at all, and then only for five minutes. Should I?"

The two-column speech I launched into her shell-like ear swept away all fears and we planned to tryst at 8 o'clock under the autumn night for five consecutive, immortal minutes, come what might. The exact spot for the great soul conference was to be the grain chute which sat near her sire's mansion on a sharp embankment adjoining the kitchen.

"A temple of Venus," said I, thrilling with romance.

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When the dance broke up I pressed her hand and uttered the single magical word: "Remember!"

* * *

After a century of waiting Saturday night rolled around and found me on a sturdy bay mustang galloping Nellward under a half moon through the pine-scented valley to her farmhouse, nine miles away. The love songs of the period floated from my lips, filtered through a beating heart. Within the hour I discerned the welcome light of the home which nestled against the somber hills. In a jack pine grove about one hundred yards from the rendezvous I tied my faithful steed, glanced at my tried and true Waterbury watch and came to the platform of the grain house which rested against the embankment. It was so constructed that the chute, about fifteen feet in depth, could be opened at the base, thus releasing the golden grain. I perched myself on the rim of the shaft and waited for the fair one.

Eight-ten; eight-fifteen; eight-twenty. Would she never come? Presently a door opened into the night and the figure of a girl was silhouetted against the luminous aperture. Then the door closed and I heard the soft footfalls of some one approaching the grain house, which was covered by a roof resting on exposed pillars. There were no walls. At last!

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But the one who came was not the adored one.

"I'm Ruth," spake a voice. "Sister Nellie says she can't come out. Papa's got the hives and she's making salve for him. Could you come next Saturday night?"

The blow must have stunned me. At all events I fell backward into the grain pit about eight feet below sea level. I struck the hard packed cereal like a sack of flour, and while still lying on my back I looked up and saw the pale, terrified features of Nell's awful sister staring down at me.

"How you gonna get out?" she asked in alarm.

For answer I began to claw at the slick sides of the chute, against which a mighty stream of wheat and corn had been polishing a glass surface for many years. I clutched at the brown, polished knots, praying that they were apertures into which I could sink my fingers. A cold perspiration broke out all over me. The kid aloft shared my terror.

"What'll I do?" she wailed.

"Let down some baling rope," I replied, "and tie one end to something so a man can climb out."

I heard her moving about excitedly on the platform. "Here it comes," she said. "You better hurry up."

I seized the loose strands and bracing my feet against the sides of the chute began to mount hand over hand.

Spang! The three strands snapped in uni-

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son and I returned to the breakfast food on my neck. Four times I tried the ascent and each time returned on my back or my ear. Spowie!

Panting and paralyzed with anxiety I stayed down on the last tumble. Hopeless. At daybreak I would be discovered and shot. Suddenly the kid sister got hold of a bright idea.

"I'll open the chute below and you can leak out," she said. "And I'll never tell anybody. Good night."

She scampered down to the orifice and pulled the board free. Blessed child. In a few seconds I felt myself sinking downward to liberty. No hourglass ever trickled its sands so slowly. I counted the knots in the glossy boards as they came deliberately into view. An hour was consumed before I came to the funnel angles, at which point I was petrified with the fear that the opening would not be large enough to emit me. All Nellie's father had was the hives. But me! Well, at 9:45 the last kernels of prime wheat trickled through, with Mr. Lochinvar II a close runner-up. I wormed and forced myself to liberty, leaving some valuable skin at the exit, glad indeed to get away from the flour of the family.

* * *

Mounting my mustang I galloped back to town on the wings of the night, sowing my wild oats

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from torn garments all the way home. And from that sowing the roadside is still green with waving grain.

I saw Nellie frequently after that, but she never could see me.

XLIII

MY TRIUMPH ON THE HIGH BICYCLE IN RENO, JULY 4, 1887

THE annual Madison Square six-day bicycle races tap the wells of my memory, and I am carried back to the days when the old high wheeler came into vogue and the "atheletes" of the countryside sought to break the world's records a-pedaling.

* * *

Reno, Nevada, which has since acquired no little fame as a retreat for those who married in haste, was the city in which the State Fair was usually held. In the early days live stock, agricultural products and horseflesh under saddle and in harness made up the program of attractions. To be sure the shell game, chuck-a-luck, crap, wheel of fortune, faro and minor games of chance enjoyed concessions. A select delegation of confidence men from San Francisco always attended and took toll from the inmates of the fair ground. And no questions asked.

In 1887, however, the State Fair Commissioners got liberal and one hundred dollars' worth of gold medals were hung up for the bicycling bugs. The

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announcement was hurled broadcast on June 1, which allowed thirty-four days for intensive training. As a member of the Capital City Wheelmen, having its headquarters in Carson, I made application to be sent to Reno as one of eight to defend the honor of the home club. The committee on racing told me to lay off such a foolish idea as that.

"We can't jeopardize the standing of the Capital City Wheelmen," said the chairman, "with any such experiment. You can enter as a dark horse, but you don't represent the club."

Stung to the quick by this dastardly fiat I took my troubles to an old ex-trainer and asked him to put me in shape to wipe out the stain. He agreed, provided I would go on a diet of his selection, run twelve miles a day to fortify my wind and do my sprinting on the bicycle only at night. He selected a smooth half-mile stretch on the Hot Springs road three miles out of town, where, under cover of darkness, each night for four weeks I pumped back and forth under maximum speed. The training and the diet did the trick. I became as hard as nails and as fast as the wind. Secrecy and obedience were the ritual.

On the night of July 1, when I got to the try-out stretch, I found Mr. George Givervich, George Bryson and Mark Livingston seated in a buckboard waiting for something to turn up. They were all of the gambling gentry and had come at

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the invitation of my trainer to see me do my stuff.

“Let yourself out to-night, kid,” said he, “and if you are as good as I think you are there will be the devil to pay in Reno on the Fourth. We will get the money and you’re in, kid—in deep. We win, you win.”

The three plungers, one at each end and one in the middle of a previously measured quarter-mile stretch, took their positions with the understanding that I was to have a flying start and that a pistol shot would be fired as I hit the scratch and another when I hit the finish. Stop watches* took the time between the first and second flashes.

If I do say it myself, as shouldn’t, I made the first sprint of a quarter of a mile in $30\frac{1}{4}$ seconds. After a ten-minute rest I warmed up again and made it in 29 flat. There wasn’t enough good road to cover a longer distance, but in the two spurts I proved my prime condition for the Reno meet. The trio of sports hustled back to town and held a midnight session with other sure thing disciples. The stage was set for a big clean-up, and under pledge of sealed lips. Reno had announced her intention of backing the home talent to the last red cent.

* * *

All set! On the morning of the Fourth, accompanied by my taciturn trainer, I took the train

* Both were later proved to be defective mechanisms.

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for Reno, traveling with my bicycle in the baggage car. The chosen speed masters of the club came in and commented on my drawn condition. All the sad young men felt sorry for me.

The race was called for 2 o'clock and the grand stand and paddock were packed to the rails. Each bicycle club had its chosen representatives, seventeen in all. I alone was without representation. An undercurrent of anxiety meandered among the pool sharks. Vague rumors were abroad that Carson had something up its sleeve. Reno dough began to appear when the names of the riders were posted.

Half an hour prior to the race the sum of \$100,000 floated into the *pari mutuels* at odds of one, two and three to five on the dark horse. My backers covered every bet offered by the Renoites with such alacrity that the odds tumbled. At 2 o'clock the race was called and seventeen slabs of veal started from the grand stand. It would be profanation to describe the race in detail. I found no difficulty keeping at the head of the procession to the third quarter, at which point I leaned forward over the handlebars like a half-closed jackknife and cut loose to the finish. The occupants of the grand stand, having no familiarity with the correct racing position, flung wild cries across the field: "Bob's got the bellyache!" My backers knew better and took every bet offered. I passed the judge's stand 200 yards ahead of all comers

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—time 2:57½—the first American record under three minutes made on a high bicycle on a dirt track for one mile. Pandemonium broke loose. Twenty yards beyond the tape I slid from the bicycle and fell prone in the dust. The dying gladiator was picked up by the populace and borne from the track on the shoulders of the little group of bettors who had cleaned up \$115,000.

Some of my backers in an excess of gratitude offered me a prize of \$1,500, but my brother wheelmen warned me that if I took a bean of hard money I would cease to be an amateur wheelman and become a professional. They talked me out of accepting filthy lucre, and I had to be content with an agricultural society's gold medal fashioned from a \$20 gold piece.

Three years later in San Francisco on a certain foggy night when all the world seemed sad and dreary I pawned the medal for \$10. A week afterward I saw the pawnshop burn to the ground. No insurance, no hope of redress, no balm of Gilead.

For some reason or other the New York *Clipper* overlooked this record-breaking ride, but I did get a letter from the *Police Gazette* asking for my picture "standing beside my wheel, *preferably in tights.*" I referred the letter to the chairman of the Capital City Wheelmen, into which I had been admitted as an honorary member.

"What," said he, "would an amateur be doing in the *Police Gazette*? Be yourself!"

XLIV

MY FORCED PERSONATION OF RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

THE death of Charles Belmont Davis brings to my mind an occasion wherein I stood for one hectic week in the shoes of his brother, R. H. It was not my own will but that of another which made me the masquerader.

Shortly after the close of the Spanish-American War, while on the staff of the *New York Journal*, I had an assignment that took me to Mexico. The gentleman with whom I sought an interview was a resident of Monterey in the State of Nuevo Leon, a few hours' journey by rail from the American border. In order that my approach might not be unheralded I sent from Laredo, the custom house headquarters between this country and Mexico, the following telegram:

ARRIVING MONTEREY ELEVEN O'CLOCK TO-
NIGHT. DESIRABLE THAT WE CONFER ON MAT-
TERS IMPORTANT TO YOU AND US.

R. H. DAVIS,

NEW YORK JOURNAL

That signature appears to have done all the damage. Promptly on time the narrow-gauge

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wolverene rolled into Monterey and I rolled off. But for a lonely baggage man and a Mexican mule driver the station was deserted. Overhead hung a chandelier of stars occupying the whole heavens. But the bowl of night was opal, not black, and the trees and mountains that hemmed in the valley were in clear silhouette. The moon was so brilliant that the distant adobe huts were visible on the landscape. The train rattled away to the south leaving me in the midst of a silence so profound that it was oppressive.

All Mexico seemed asleep. Out of the quiet, far away, I caught the echoes of hoof beats, blending with the rattle of harness and the clicking of rolling wheels. Presently I detected the glint of carriage lights and their reflection on metal ornaments. Down the road between the eucalyptus trees and palms and giant cactus came an open victoria drawn by two magnificent bays stepping in perfect rhythm. On the box was a gorgeous coachman with the garb of Mayfair, a bell topper and a cockade. The equipage wheeled in a graceful circle and stopped. A portly person, looking for all the world like Cecil Rhodes, stepped out and extended his hand.

“Mr. Davis, I presume?”

“Colonel Robertson, I believe?”

“The same. Welcome to the Republic of Mexico.”

Never was reception more cordial. My host

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exuded agreeability and handed me into his victoria with true hospitality and warmth. We drove for two miles through redolent avenues of fruits and foliage that threw off an intoxicating perfume. Suddenly there burst upon my vision a brilliantly illuminated one-story structure nestling in a paradise of tropical beauty, a startling transformation to the travel-stained stranger. I was handed over to a pair of Mexican servants in white duck and hustled into a tub of crystal and scented water, from which I emerged refreshed. A stately valet brought me a suit of immaculate linen into which I was assisted with skill and alacrity.

My host offered his arm as I reappeared and escorted me in the general direction of a stringed orchestra. Presently I found myself on a wide veranda containing a Lucullan banquet table upon which were arrayed napery and silver, flowers and crystal, flagons and tankards. A group of gentlemen dressed in smart riding attire rose to greet me; a delegation of country squires. Dumfounded, I paused.

"My friend," the Colonel was speaking, "it is not often that we are permitted to entertain a celebrity. To-night, however, we feast upon intellectuality. I have the honor to present the distinguished American author and internationally famous war correspondent, Richard Harding Davis."

MY FORCED PERSONATION

A fine kettle of fish, but not of my cooking. The guests, representing the big business of Monterey, swarmed to the fore and shook my hand with fervor. I was on the point of shouting the truth, but my host, beaming at his coup and thrilled at my reception, had made a sign and the servitors began gliding in with the viands. Lacking the courage to spill the beans and thus humiliate my host, I stalled and fibbed, and boasted and backed and filled until the words became bitter on my tongue. My career was toasted, my praises sung and my books acclaimed. Behind the mask I re-fought the Spanish-American War, described the coronation of the Czar, the enthroning of King Edward and the arrival of the Infanta Eulalia in America. I skinned General Shafter, Commander Wainwright and Richmond Hobson alive, and revealed their innermost thoughts.

Shortly after dawn I was accredited with having written the music to "On the Road to Mandalay," which the guests sang merrily as they mounted their thoroughbreds and cantered back to the city. And, what's more, I had accepted an invitation to dine with six of them in the ensuing week.

Standing in the garden beside the Colonel after the glad songsters had disappeared and the new day was creeping from its cradle, I determined to reveal myself.

"There has been a slight mistake," I said cautiously—"a mistake that I should like to correct."

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"In what particular, my boy?"

"I am not Richard Harding Davis!"

"Who?" he exclaimed. "Who the devil are you?"

"Robert Hobart, otherwise Bob Davis, same business, same initials as Richard Harding. The resemblance ends there."

He swayed into a cactus, harpooned himself and then came back to life like a true sportsman.

"R. H.—Bob," he said with a twinkle in his eye. "I am not going back on any of the Davis boys, but you have got to go through with the whole program mapped out for the week. Nobody is going to have the laugh on me. Let's go to bed."

I ran riot socially in Monterey for six days and was quite a lion; signing autograph albums and copies of Richard Harding's books for all comers, always with the "R. H. Davis" signature. "Why not the full name?" many asked.

"Oh, that's merely for book use," was my invariable reply.

At the last dinner in the series I made a full confession and we split the laugh into seven pieces.

I learned afterward that following my departure genuine autographs of one R. H. Davis were offered in the open market as low as thirty cents, Mex.

* * *

MY FORCED PERSONATION

When I told the real Davis of the masquerade he flecked some imaginary dust from my lapel and replied softly : “I hope, old man, that you dressed the part properly.”

XLV

LO, THE POOR RED INDIAN AND THE HAUNTED OVERCOAT

INJUN story this. No likum, no readum.

Hy Downs was and still is the keeper of a short tunnel on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad which winds its way through a spur of the Sierra Nevadas. When Hy wasn't occupied with the guardianship of the tunnel, which was most of the time, he was off in the hills hunting or fishing. He was the first white man to let me handle firearms in his presence, and he taught me how to fish. I loved him then; I love him now.

Once More was a Washoe Indian who was in love with the squaw that did Hy Downs's weekly washing. Like all men, red or white, who go a-courting, Once More revealed his passion to a third party, which in this instance happened to be Mr. Downs. In turn the tunnel keeper let me in on the secret and together we decided to throw Once More into the company of his dusky lady love as often as possible. Her name was Talti-pi.

Having introduced the cast of characters and

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disclosed the plot it is time to make mention of the haunted overcoat, without which this yarn would be no yarn at all.

The coat in question was a thick shoddy garment that a cowboy had won in a poker game from a tin horn. He tied it on behind his saddle and started for the range. In the course of his journey he came upon the thinly clad Once More, and in a moment of compassion gave him the coat. Mr. Downs and myself, hunting quail, happened along shortly thereafter and found the red man, transfixed with admiration, sitting beside the coat. What got his aboriginal eye was the lining, a gorgeous Scotch plaid with all the colors of the McDonalds, the McTavishes and the McIntoshes. It simply reeked with color. Greens, browns, yellow, reds, blues. The limit.

Right here is a good place to inject the fact that Hy was a joking man and made light of the serious things in life. He seemed to lack reverence.

"It's haunted," said Hy picking up the overcoat the better to examine it. "You can't keep the color, Once More. Some day when you ain't lookin' it will fly off. You better let Tal-ti-pli see it right away. Put it on and come back to the tunnel. She's washing there to-day and you'll be heap strong with her."

It was a matter of six miles to the rendezvous and Once More agreed to make the experiment. Within ten minutes after we started a thunder-

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storm broke into a perfect deluge. The overcoat absorbed water like a sponge and became heavier and heavier. Once More, unaccustomed to real wearing apparel, began to sweat, but he hung to his costume uncomplaining. He was as wet inside as out and arrived at the upper end of the tunnel heavy as lead. The rain had ceased and Once More was steaming.

The three of us plunged into the tunnel, coming presently into the pitch black. In the patch of light at the far end we could see Tal-ti-pli bending over her tub cleansing Mr. Downs's limited wardrobe.

"Now's your chance, Once More," urged Hy. "Turn the coat inside out so she can see what you got." In the darkness we took the garment off and let Once More cool off. At that moment he also got cold feet and began to balk.

"No likum. Heap crazy."

"She's waiting for you. Go on," we coaxed. "Train's due."

"You takum coat. I come 'lone."

Nothing else would do. We had to go on and wait for him. When Hy came out of the tunnel he had the plaid nightmare thrown over his arm so that the whole frightful color scheme was visible to Tal-ti-pli.

"Where you catchum?" she asked, leaving her tub and running forward.

"Him b'long Once More, fine Injun," said Hy.

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“H-u-m. Me like.” Tal-ti-pli stroked the rainbow and wet her lips.

We looked back into the tunnel and saw the Indian emerging from the shadows. The 4:10 passenger whistle blew as the train entered the far end of the tunnel. Once More looked back, then started to run toward us.

What came out of that black pit was unquestionably a Washoe buck, but he showed all the class and all the color of a stained glass window taking the air at twenty miles an hour. The haunted overcoat had shed its plaid pattern on the torso of the steaming and rain-soaked red man now on his way. He broke into the open and side-tracked himself as the train thundered by. Above the roar sounded the shriek of Tal-ti-pli, whose eyes were glued on the ghost of the clan McTavish blended with the McDonalds and the McIntoshes.

Once More saw enough of himself to know that the prophecy of Mr. Downs had come true; more than true—that he himself was now haunted. Terrified beyond description, Once More bolted for Hy’s cabin and was cut off by Tal-ti-pli, who chased him through the garden, around the house and across the track to the lip of the hill. At that point there was nothing left for him to do but to jump into space and slide down the embankment. The now thoroughly aroused lovelorn laundress jumped after him and hit the earth run-

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ning. She wanted, above all things, to overtake the fleeing comic supplement and assure him of her undying affection.

When it seemed that Once More would make his escape and save his colors, Tal-ti-pli flung herself upon him and burst into hysterical tears. Mr. Downs and I led them back to the cabin, where we got the panting pair to look calmly on the opportunity that had come so suddenly and unexpectedly into their lives.

In the balmy atmosphere of the cozy kitchen, Tal-ti-pli, holding the brown hand of Once More, gave way to tears, some of which fell upon his bare bosom and smeared the plaid pattern. A touching scene full of color and tenderness.

They departed for the tribal base toward evening, Tal-ti-pli bearing the haunted overcoat over her arm and Once More striding grim but decorated beside her. I never saw them again.

* * *

Two years ago, while visiting the West, I called at the tunnel to see Hy, now a man of seventy odd years. I asked for Once More and Tal-ti-pli.

"Well, my boy," he replied, the crow's feet gathering at his eyes, "I heard that he began to fade after the honeymoon and that she left him for a hand painted man. Anyhow, he changed his name to Never Again."

XLVI

THE BROKEN MAN WHO INFLUENCED MY WHOLE LIFE *

BLOOD is thicker than water and the ties of kinship are the ties that bind. But there are links between men who have come from the ends of the earth that distance or time cannot sever—memories that survive like fresh flowers endowed with immortality.

No man may fathom the mystery of friendship or analyze that magnetic current which flows between two mortals throughout all of life and unites them as the ether welds the voices of the world. And yet friendship is an inarticulate thing, an intangible quality of emotion deeper than can be expressed in words. It lacks form and source, genesis and control. Having the power of life or death over itself and the will to perpetuation it is equally sensitive to a realm of antagonism. It is born of hope and dies of distrust. It comes unbidden, warms itself into life under the breath of reciprocation—or dies.

There is no greater boon to mankind than a friendship which endures through the whole of

* On March 19, 1927, Hy Downs, the subject of the preceding, and this chapter, died in Carson City, Nevada.

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one's existence. It is the supreme manifestation of human understanding and the crown of earthly happiness.

* * *

When I became fifteen years of age I met a one-armed man by the name of Hy Downs. He was the watchman of a tunnel through which the Virginia and Truckee Railroad made its roaring entrance into Eagle Valley, where Carson City, the capital of Nevada, lay like an emerald of varying shades. In his youth Hy was a brakeman, following an occupation fraught with danger and daring. One stormy night he was knocked from the roof of a box car and maimed. He emerged from the hospital minus his right arm and the thumb of his left hand. The sight of his right eye was impaired almost to uselessness.

Undaunted, he became the keeper of the black tunnel high up on the mountain, where for more than forty years he breathed smoke and cinders of freight and passenger trains clanking in and out of town. The country was alive with fish and game, and for recreation Hy took up rod and gun. Not even the handicap of a thumbless left arm deterred him. He became one of the finest quail and duck shots in the state, charging his muzzle loader by gripping it between his knees, operating the powder and shot flask with his teeth. He was the most self-reliant man I have ever known. His

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cabin was the acme of cleanliness and his personal habits an inspiration.

Hy Downs and I became inseparable companions. When not at school I was with him. We ranged the mountains, the lakes and the rivers. I was the Boy Scout and he was Dan Beard. We camped and packed and hunted and fished from dawn to twilight. He taught me all there was to know about the great outdoors, the camp fire, the shelters in storm and darkness, the haunts of wild things, the night side of nature, the way of a man with the elements.

He gave me the counsel that only an adult can give a boy, and made me understand that man was supreme in every crisis; that indecision was cowardice. He made me do my share of the work and the toting, dividing whatever glories grew out of the chase.

He had a queer philosophy about what was going on outside the zone of our ranging. He warned me against the evils that lay beyond the high hills, of the pitfalls that I would encounter when I got beyond his control. I can see him now as I write these lines, see him almost within reach as he sat in the glow of the camp fire, tamping his pipe with the stump of his left thumb.

“Bobby”—he called me by that name up to 1925, when I last saw him on the occasion of a visit back home—“you must never think of yourself first unless you are in danger. But never

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desert another in danger. One quitter can lose a whole war. Liars have no friends. Don't ask favors; do them. Never kick a dog; he can't kick back."

Hy had the good sense not to make his kindly advice assume the proportions of a lecture. He rambled along in a gently persuasive tone of voice, applying his doctrines and his precepts to each situation as it came into the conversation. He had the finest instincts of a born gentleman, and treated me always as an equal. I detected, however, a feeling of guardianship over me and many a night as we lay under our blankets I felt his remaining arm steal over me to readjust the covering and assure my comfort before he drifted off to sleep. His gift of consideration was developed to a high degree and his concern for others was his most marked characteristic.

In my nineteenth year I bade Hy Downs good-by and went out of the valley to inspect the world beyond, taking with me his assurance that when I returned he would be waiting for me at the tunnel entrance. Destiny had planned that I was not to return for long, but when I did come back for a visit he was there, waving the left arm and smiling. We always took a trip into the hills and camped together. We talked till dawn, but at last he covered me as of yore, and said good night again.

From 1897 to 1925 I wandered all over the

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Union and quite around the world, communicating with him from every quarter of the globe. His letters, written laboriously with his mutilated hand, are still in my possession. None save myself can translate their affection.

On my last trip Jim Savage, the engineer of the passenger train, a former schoolmate, stopped the flier at the tunnel. Hy, nearing his eightieth year, was standing on the spot where he had stood for half his life. I dropped from the coach and went toward him. He was old and gray and unsteady, but I felt no reluctance about coming into his circling left arm, nor do I regret that we embraced each other as kin of the blood and let the mist well to our eyes. Jim Savage did not wait.

* * *

One March Sunday I received this wire:

HY DOWNS DIED SATURDAY MORNING; FUNERAL MONDAY.

To which, after a time, I replied:

PLACE THIS TELEGRAM IN HIS FAITHFUL HAND AS HE LIES IN STATE: "GOOD-BY, HY! LOOK THE RIVER OVER FOR HUNTING, FISHING AND GOOD CAMP SITES ON THE DISTANT SHORE. I WILL JOIN YOU SOME DAY AND REVIEW AGAIN THAT MYSTERY CALLED LIFE. THERE MAY BE BETTER WORLDS BEYOND, BUT NO BETTER MEN THAN YOU.

BOBBY

XLVII

COMMANDER BYRD'S REFLECTIONS AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD

ON May 9, 1926, after nine hours of actual flight by airplane, Commander Richard Evelyn Byrd, a Virginian, reached the north pole at an elevation of three thousand feet and looked down from a clear sky upon the top of the world. Not since the dawn of time had other eyes than his fallen upon that illimitable waste from the upper air.

The land, the sea and the sky throbbed with the great adventure, and all mankind heard the details from the lips of the wanderer. His voice filled all the air and passed into infinitude to mingle with the stars.

* * *

Last week I met this tourist of the atmospheres and talked with him. His are reluctant lips, from which speech comes with deliberation. Trained in a school of mathematical accuracy, his conversation is direct and lucid. The same instinct for direction that had marked his flight over the world manifests itself in his vocal communications.

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Physically he suggests a delicate instrument fabricated to the point of frailty. If one chooses to regard him as a product of evolution it is easy to conceive that in the remote past he might have been a frigate bird winging his way on the gales across the seven seas. Even in repose he seems prepared for flight; leaning forever forward into the wind. In action he is Annapolis personified, erect, alert, eager. His eyes are binocular, apparently penetrating to horizons beyond human vision.

From his high, Anglo-Saxon, slightly sloping forehead the hair ripples in wave lengths that might well have been the offspring of a steady west wind blowing fair upon him from infancy; a buoyant creature born in the breeze. He was fashioned for this generation of fliers, and his pinions are poised for the air.

But there are two Byrds in that one body: a realist and a dreamer; a conqueror of the clouds of the earth, a commuter in the realm of great imagination. With one inadvertent question I stripped him of his aviator's plumage. He fell with his feet on *terra firma*, among those who walk upward on the surface of the world.

"What," was the query, "were you thinking about when you crossed the pole in the air?"

For one transitory second the eaglet folded up his wings and dropped his fine dark eyes in humility. "Do you really want to know?" he answered,

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lifting his glance and recovering his calm. "I have not been asked that."

"Do you mind?"

"No." And then the real Byrd cast off his armor of reserve and addressed the earthbound. "I thought of the infinitesimal proportions of mortal man, of the frailty of the atoms that occupy the spaces, of the limitations of those who have taken over the conduct of civilization. I caught for the first time, as in a flash of understanding, the inadequate results of the effort to solve not the enigmas of space and duration but the problems of mankind.

"At any point of the earth's circumference, at a given elevation, human vision encounters its limitations. The telescope amplifies a definite point, but the whole field of visibility, discernible to human eyes, is comparatively restricted. Beneath me lay a vast, silent, unoccupied field of snow and ice, varying in tone and without life. My knowledge of what existed beyond at every degree of the circle, plus my imagination, carried me into the temperate and tropical zones, the peopled places, the seats of empire, the scenes of turmoil and conquest and the survival of the fittest. I saw armies and navies beyond the fringe of that arctic wilderness over which a metal mechanism designed by man was plunging onward."

Commander Byrd, in the throes of reflection,

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passed his hand across his forehead and lapsed into silence, from which he emerged presently as though from a trance. He picked up the thread:

“I thought of the beginnings; the primitive past, the gradual development of man, the widely separated units that preyed upon one another, the readjustments that took place and of which no records remain. At that time the passing of one group or another was of small significance, in no wise affecting the world as a whole. The little peoples were too far apart to feel the consequences of the minor obliterations. Slowly, out of the chaos, the units became interdependent, the races began to unite, the responsibilities of each increasing as the mutual interests expanded. Figuratively, the world became smaller and the sword longer. Each unit began to feel the effect of conflict. The gaps between countries disappeared; the strong came to the weak and possessed them. Foreign armies conquered other lands. Flames were visible across the seas.

“War, destruction, hatred took the saddle at the peak of civilization. To-day a shot fired in any country is not only heard but felt around the world. The distant tread of soldiers shakes the whole globe, affects all its inhabitants, disorganizes all classes, saps the vitality of every nation. A declaration of war is an earthquake that racks both hemispheres. We have remade the world, ripped it asunder and remade it time

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and again. We have improved and progressed and developed, but we have failed to make the most of ourselves. We have explored everything except our consciences. We are still a horde of pygmies, selfish and envious, each striving for individual supremacy. 7

"We have come through the ages worshipping in our different ways the Supreme Being that best suits our multiplied faiths, but the sum total of our occupation of this shrinking planet is a pitiful demonstration of weakness. It is not the geographical but the moral limitations of the world that must be charted and the really great explorers will be those who find the way to universal reconstruction, the first step in which is the abolition of war and the needless destruction of human life."

He was looking at me quite earnestly now.

"Those were the thoughts that occupied my mind May 9 as I flew over the north pole and on the way back to my native land."

* * *

It is an encouraging sign that Commander Byrd, who circled the globe in his twelfth year, and hovered over the top of the world when he was thirty-eight, should be thinking only of the future and the reclamation of that which survives.

XLVIII

SKILL AS AN ARCHER AND TRIUMPHS AS AN ART COLLECTOR

FROM all accounts the bow and arrow, first invented weapon of the primitives, is returning to its own. Stewart Edward White has adopted it as a means for exterminating the lions, leopards and vermin of the African jungle that have thus far escaped firearms. No noise, no smoke. Stewart just walks up to his prey and plants a steel-tipped, feathered shaft in some vital spot, after which the photographers move in and take some copyrighted pictures.

In my sixteenth year I came across the story of William Tell, the Swiss gentleman who shot an apple from the head of his son and by so doing won his lifelong liberty from a tyrant king. Swept off my feet by the colorful narrative I notified my father that I intended to take up the study of archery and become the champion of the world. He attempted to dissuade me, pointing out the fact that there was no particular demand for archers in that part of the country, or elsewhere for that matter, but I had heard the call and must act accordingly.

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From some mysterious source he secured the necessary funds to equip me with a lemonwood bow, twelve arrows and a gaudy leather quiver.

For the next three months I poured arrows into a straw target, arriving finally at a point of excellence that made me unbearable to the whole family. However, those hours of practice were not in vain, as was proved when the local paper announced that at the next Caledonian picnic at Treadway's Park there would be an archery competition for the championship of the Pacific coast. This news roused my mother to such a pitch of concurrence that she made a William Tell costume for me. A smart cap carrying a chicken hawk feather, a jerkin with pleats and nifty cuffs, tights pea green and snug indeed. She extended the quiver belt, so that it swung against my thigh; a pair of gauntlet gloves. Climax! Page William Tell.

Pardon this interruption, but there hung in our quiet parlor in the dim light over the doorway a picture of Victor Hugo, which my elder brother, Sam, who pulled another kind of long bow, confided to me was the masterpiece of a celebrated French painter, who was exiled by Napoleon III, for immortalizing his enemy in oil. Long had I craved that picture, so I made bold to request of my father that it be willed to me if I won the archery championship. He agreed that Victor would be mine if I came back victorious.

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The eventful Saturday arrived and found me, dressed in the glory that was Swiss, at the depot where special trains were dumping the merry throng from neighboring towns. Bands were blaring and all was bright and fair. I attracted considerable attention, but was calm withal. People from out of town saw fit to kid the young archer, but nevertheless I was the first contestant on the spot where the committee of arrangements had rigged up the archery props. The posted rules read:

12 M.: All contestants will make entry on the register with the quill pen.

12:30 P.M.: Each contestant will qualify by shooting one arrow into the target field.

1 P.M.: Contestants will draw for lead and the contest will begin.

At high noon three gigantic Cornishmen from the Comstock mines showed up in full regalia, bearing bows of supreme power and laden with arrows that looked as large as billiard cues. My pygmy heart almost ceased beating until I observed that one of the trio was too pickled to sign his name with the quill pen. The committee gave him the air. I thought of the exultant cry of Edmond Dantes in the *Count of Monte Cristo*: "ONE!"

At about twenty minutes past noon I observed the second archery entrant in the act of lying

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down full length on an improvised wooden bar from which mighty schooners of steam beer were being dealt out to thirsty Caledonians. He was quite in the way of traffic and in spite of his gaudy costume was rapidly losing caste with the regular customers. One of the beer slingers, who had never heard of William Tell, crowned the archer with a pitcher of malt that had been set aside until its collar wilted. A fountain of froth shot skyward and fell back like a deluge of soap suds into the dreamer's face. He pitched from the bar with a loud bellow, staggered away and fell into a ditch where, with his bow splintered and his arrows scattered about, he passed into a deep sleep. "TWO!"

The remaining contestant and myself showed up and each fired an arrow into the target. Again we faded away and mingled with the people. I followed him at a safe distance wonderingly. He had a marvelous thirst, but was as steady on his pins as the Bunker Hill Monument. I was beginning to despair of his downfall when, without rime or reason, he let out a wild whoop and tried to do the giant swing from the limb of an apple tree in full fruit. Not a dignified performance for William Tell. The limb broke on the third lap and four kindly Caledonians carried him to a near-by farmhouse. "THREE!"

I hurried to the archery field, where, alone and unchallenged, I fired one shaft into the target and

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was acclaimed champion of the Pacific coast—by default.

When the news of my success was borne to my father he replied with great dignity, but without knowing any of the details: "Due to the fact that the boy has always led a temperate and clean life."

The trophy was a silver pickle dish—with tongs.

* * *

Forty years lie between then and now. Last August I made a pilgrimage to the home of my departed people. Among the few effects that remained of our none too rich estate I came upon two parcels. One contained the pickle dish trophy, no longer silver—it never was. Pewter was its portion, dull, but still beautiful. The other parcel was my legacy; my second prize for skill in archery: the portrait of Victor Hugo. Instead of a masterpiece in oil, it proved to be a chromo issued by the old *Philadelphia Ledger* to subscribers who paid one year in advance.

"How dear to my heart are the scenes. . . ."

The costume of the American William Tell had become the soul of a rag carpet trod by alien feet.

Victor now hangs in my library and the pewter trophy is the show piece on my humble sideboard.

XLIX

QUEER EFFECT OF SALT AIR ON A DEEP SEA DIAGNOSTICIAN

MID-ATLANTIC, August 24.

FOR the last five days I have been reclining in a deck chair on the *Conte Rosso* alongside Irvin S. Cobb, who in his own country has for many years enjoyed the "privacy of a goldfish."

Among the numerous sports and pastimes of ocean travel none is more popular than that of analyzing the various passengers who, after Fire Island is passed, emerge from their staterooms and crawl into the open. The procession seems endless in its variety and mood; kaleidoscopic in its garb and incomprehensively polyglot in speech. Concerning these people:

"Who," I asked Mr. Cobb, "is the brown-haired girl with the ten-year-old boy?" The pair came sauntering down the deck, hand in hand; a sparkling unit.

"English, I should guess," said Cobb, "returning via Italy, France or Spain and back to London before the cold weather. Educating the kid in a course of travel. Mother's name is probably Iris and the boy's Lancelot."

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I would have guessed "Violet" and "Cecil," but an argument at sea is a hopeless proposition—or anywhere, for that matter, with the gentleman from Paducah.

Down the deck came a flanneled person walking with all the form of the great Weston. He bowed to one and all, bestowed a friendly pat upon children, saluted the ship's officers and was in excellent spirits.

"Ah!" exclaimed Irvin. "Here we have a leading citizen from Terre Haute, chairman of the Rotary Club, a Knight of Pythias and the largest stockholder in the local bank. He will make a speech at the captain's dinner and win no less than four of the ship's pools. Five years ago he chucked suspenders and became a free thinker."

Buoyed on the tide of his exuberance the white garbed party floated about the deck and spread good cheer. Every other lap he threw a kindly glance in the direction of Cobb, but each time decided that the moment was not propitious for friendly negotiations.

A stocky youth wearing heavy check knickerbockers and a pair of evil and noxious golf socks blew along.

"Oh, no," expostulated Irvin. "Don't you see that he has his hands in his pockets? If a bootlegger, he'd have 'em in yours."

That seemed logical. We spent another hour or so in idle speculation and finally joined the

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passing show. There is a limit to pedestrianism even at sea, so after an incredibly short stroll we wound up in the smoking room. On our heels came the "gentleman from Terre Haute." He spotted the Kentuckian and presented himself.

"Pardon this intrusion," he began, "but this is perhaps the only opportunity I shall ever have to thank you for the many hours of pleasure that you have given me. Professionally I am an expert public accountant and have many clients among the leading business men of Vancouver, B. C., where I reside. However, I have a great admiration for humor. 'Laugh and the world laughs with you.' And, Mr. Cobb, *you* have made me laugh."

"Thank you, my friend," said the humorist with a courtly Southern bow. "It is always pleasant to hear that one's humble efforts are not in vain. You are on a holiday, I take it."

"Yes, just a little jaunt. Must get back by the first of November and start on the annual report of a large power company by which I am retained. Never neglect my business, but I've got to have my laughter. 'Weep and you weep alone.' By the way, Mr. Cobb, I'll wager that you can't guess the particular work of yours that gives me the most amusement."

"Naturally," replied Cobb, blushing and rocking on the balls of his feet; "humor, so called, is difficult to classify. Of course, if I did know

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what the individual prefers it would have certain influence upon my future work. However, I am not a good guesser."

And that from Cobb, who had spent the entire morning guessing. Pardon this interruption at so critical a juncture in the dialogue.

"Well, I'll tell you," continued the C.P.A., his face wreathed in smiles. "It is your celebrated series depicting the screamingly ludicrous performances of Mutt and Jeff."

It would have been music to the ears of Bud Fisher had he been present during the convulsion that came billowing from the overpowered book-keeper, who laughed so hard and so long that Mr. Cobb and I were enabled to escape from the smoking salon and reach the fresh air, where we both had a private laugh amid an exchange of badinage. Irvin knows a good joke when he hears it.

The next morning we met "Iris" face to face at the purser's desk. She looked Cobb full in the eye, yanked "Lancelot" up with a jerk and halted.

"Is this Mr. Irvin Cobb?" she asked in broad American accents.

"Yes, madam."

"Well, I thought I recognized you. Didn't I say, Bennie, it was Mr. Cobb when I saw him coming aboard?" Bennie nodded his fine young British bean in acquiescence. "I first met you in Ossining when your family moved up there and built a house over back of Blanche Bates hill. My

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husband sold you the lawn mowers and the sprinklers. We quit Ossining after Bennie showed that he was musical. I'm takin' him to Florence, where a celebrated Italian pianist is goin' to make a concert player out of him. I'll see you again, Mr. Cobb. Where's the barber shop? I'm goin' to get my hair marceled; this salt air is awful, ain't it? Come on, Bennie."

Thus another bad guess faded out.

That same afternoon the bird with the poisonous golf socks walked over to my traveling companion, held out his hand and shouted so that the whole deck heard the fatal words:

"I am glad to meet Ty Cobb, the greatest baseball player that ever came from the Georgian peach belt. Put her there, Ty. My name's Adkins, from Seattle, and I've always wanted to meet you."

* * *

When I asked Irvin why he did not set straight the mathematician from Vancouver he replied: "He spoiled my morning. Why should I spoil his?"

L

DR. PATTON'S ONE DOLLAR INVESTMENT IN WOODROW WILSON

WARWICK, Bermuda, December 29, 1926.

EVERY Democrat, some Republicans and all of the Princeton alumni will be interested in what follows. I heard the story from the lips of a man eighty-four years old; heard it beneath the same roof under which he was born in 1843. From the windows of that domicile, which had long been the homestead of his seafaring ancestors, I could distinguish the blue Bermudian ocean, the green isles, the white beaches and the winding coral highways. It was a scene of infinite peace and a landscape of rare beauty.

The speaker must have been a strong man in his prime, for even to-day he takes one's hand with a firm grip, stands erect a full six feet, unites the past and the present in rounded rich speech, mingling laughter and rare observation with his flow of wisdom and philosophy. His hair is thick and white and the face is furrowed, but not with lines of care. Perhaps the sight is not so keen as in his youth, but the eyes are still responsive

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and the shaggy brows lift when he launches a query.

Thus in Warwick, at Carberry Hill, in the friendly Bermudas, I found Dr. Francis L. Patton, president of Princeton University from 1888 to 1902 and prior to that for seven years professor of the relations of philosophy and theology in Princeton Theological Seminary.

"In my seventieth year," he said, with a note of satisfaction, "I came to the conclusion that I had earned the right to composure. I wanted to write some books and to contemplate the progress and the problems of this civilization. To what better place can a man go than home with his beloved wife! For two hundred years my ancestors have lived on these islands. Their ships, built from the cedar that took root here, plied the ocean with Bermudian crews. We traded with Newfoundland and the mainland and were content with our lot. My whole life has been happy and I have no regrets.

"The school where I learned Latin and Greek under an old Scotch tutor is still standing. But for the trees which my father planted you could see it from the veranda. I attended that house of learning until I was sixteen. All through my career I have cherished the memories of it.

"Princeton, of course, became the ultimate triumph in my life, and I have nothing to ask of the world. In my seventieth year I surrendered

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that responsibility into younger hands. It was the right thing to do. I would not now recall any step taken during my entire lifetime. That state of mind is the perfection of contentment."

The doctor ceased speaking. I took occasion during the lull to mention Woodrow Wilson's connection with Princeton.

"It was at my instigation that he joined the faculty," was his response. "Professor Alexander Johnston of the department of political economy had died and I asked Dean Murray to suggest a successor. He named Woodrow Wilson, and I subsequently took the matter up with Judge Caleb Green, at that time the most powerful and most progressive trustee of Princeton.

" 'Who is the man you have in mind to succeed Johnston?' he asked.

" 'The present professor of political economy at Wesleyan University, in Connecticut, Thomas [he used the Thomas then] Woodrow Wilson.'

" 'I don't like him. He's a Southerner and will make trouble.'

" 'But he is a professor in a Northern university and is a man of ability. He has written a sound book on congressional government that I would like you to read,' I urged.

" 'Makes no difference! I don't like him. But I will read the book. Where can I get a copy?'

"I agreed to attend to that part of it and forthwith bought a copy. It cost me one dollar. I sent

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it to Judge Green and called the next day in the interests of my choice.

“ ‘I have read Wilson’s *Congressional Government* and I still don’t like him,’ was his definite remark. ‘You may be sure we shall have difficulty with him. That is my opinion. However, if you are convinced that he is the man for that chair we will name him. The book is not without merit.’

“That, my dear sir, is the way Woodrow Wilson came to Princeton. It was my ‘dollar diplomacy,’ the purchase of *Congressional Government* out of my private funds that caused Caleb Green to leave the nomination in my hands.”

The good, gray ex-president of Princeton leaned back in his comfortable chair and contemplated the ceiling.

“Did Mr. Wilson ever know the details of that episode?” I asked.

“Not from me,” answered the doctor. “And I doubt if Mr. Green ever mentioned the matter. In any event, it had no significance. I repeat it in answer to your original question. A trivial detail, but interesting. He succeeded me as president of Princeton. In my opinion he was a man of high attainments, and I always took pride in the fact that I was instrumental in bringing him to the faculty.”

I turned from that theme to an examination of the many photographs of well-known men that decorated the walls of Dr. Patton’s study.

DR. PATTON'S ONE DOLLAR INVESTMENT

"Hullo! here's an old friend." On the bottom of the portrait I read this line: "To Dr. Francis L. Patton, with filial affection. Job Hedges." And it was an excellent picture of our Job, an audacious, smiling, buoyant reproduction of the Princeton alumnus.

"You knew him?" asked the great Bermudian.

"Every New Yorker knew him," I announced with a feeling of pride common to us New Yorkers. "He had no peer in our town."

"Or in any town," came the response. "I dined with Job in New York shortly after his marriage. When I left him he put me in a taxicab and, pressing my hand, said: 'Good-by, doctor; I love you.'"

The last sentence came from the fine firm mouth trembling. It was the only moment in the interview that revealed the influence of the past upon the one who had spent his whole career making boys into men.

It is quite clear to me why Dr. Patton's life is the perfection of contentment.

* * *

There is a tradition in Bermuda that the mother of Francis Patton said to him when he was a boy: "My son, get all the education you can. No one may take that from you."

The truth is that young Francis Patton got all the education there was and then gave it back to the whole of mankind.

LI

THE INFLUENCE OF A FAIRY TALE UPON MY BROTHER BILL

RECENTLY in the news from Europe I have come across a constantly recurring story about a Belgian scientist who says he has found the formula for transmuting the base metals into gold.

* * *

My brother Bill and I, twelve and ten years respectively, once made some experiments along that line and secured a complete flop. Bill, who was a student, dug up the formula in a book of fairy tales which we received for a Christmas present.

“Here in the book,” said Bill, “is the story about how to make gold.” He then read a recipe for mixing the simple ingredients, all of which could be found in our mother’s kitchen, plus a few fragments of metallic junk that could be picked up in any American back yard. “But it says also that ‘while making gold after this magic formula you must be careful not to think of a white bear.’ Now, my idea is for you to mix the stuff, which I will give to another boy who

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don't know anything about white bears. That's the best way for us to get the gold."

"Every boy knows about white bears," I replied with juvenile regret.

"Well, they ain't always thinking about them, are they? All we got to do is to get the magic mixture and the metal and then let the boy who isn't thinking about the white bear stir the whole thing together and then we'll get the gold."

"Mebbe we could get hold of a boy who never heard of a white bear; a little boy who wasn't educated like us," I ventured to suggest.

"Well, you find one," said Bill, "and bring him to me. I got another idea. I'll cut all the animals out of our geography and paste them on a sheet of paper, which we will show to the boy you're going to get and ask him to name the animals. We can't take no chances with this making of the gold."

I scouted around the neighborhood and finally selected a kid about eight years of age named Barney Bowers, who impressed me as one profoundly ignorant in natural history. I told him that Bill had a new picture game and guided him around back of the barn, where the gold maker with his paraphernalia lay in wait.

"Now the idea, Barney," said Bill, spreading out the pasted sheet, which contained a dozen or more of the common animals, "is for you to tell me what these pictures are. You must name each one."

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"What is they in it for me?" asked Barney, turning the sheet over and inspecting the back carefully.

I was for giving Barney the gate at once, but Bill, full of mercenary hopes, began to traffic.

"Ten cents if you name more'n half of 'em."

"Lemme see the dime."

Bill dug up a short bit that he had been saving for months and flashed it in the palm of his hand.

Barney began his task without delay. He was all right on the elephant, the wolf, the lion, the camel, the giraffe and the tiger, but he called the zebra a jackass, the hyena a coyote, the hippopotamus a rhinoceros and the white bear a woodchuck. Bill was wild with delight and passed the dime over to Barney with what seemed to me an unnecessary display of ecstasy.

"Now there is one thing more, Barney," advised the great necromancer; "you pour what is in this can into that can and then run home."

Bewildered but grateful for Bill's display of liberality, Barney did as he was told and hustled off.

"The book says to put the magic mixture away overnight and that to-morrow at sunrise the gold will be made," advised Bill, jumping up and down buoyantly.

Ever so gently we carried the slowly transmuting combination into the barn and placed it on a girder. Bill muttered some incantations which

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seemed to be part of the ritual and then we went into the house.

In the midst of the excitement the sheet of pasted animal pictures had disappeared. A careful search failed to bring it to light, so we went to bed and passed a sleepless night waiting for the morrow. Toward morning we turned over and slumbered until mother awakened us for breakfast. Wholly disregarding the first course of oatmeal mush, we dashed out to the barn impatient to reap the harvest of gold.

There in the doorway stood Barney Bowers.

"Say, Bill," said he, "how many of them animals did I guess right?"

"Six of 'em."

"What'll you gimme if I guess the other four?"

"I won't give you nothing. What do you mean, anyhow?"

"What'll you gimme, Bob?"

"Me? I never had any money. And besides we don't care now whether you guess 'em or not."

The situation became complicated. On the girder in the barn rested the can of what we believed to be solid gold. Between us and the vast fortune stood Barney like some medieval monster blocking the way to riches.

"You fellers think you're smart," continued the neighbor's brat. "I took them pictures home to my mother and ast her to tell me what they was. She says the rhinoceros was a hippopotamus, the

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old jackass a zebra, that there coyote a hyena and the woodchuck a—”

“Stop, Barney!” shouted Bill. “Don’t say it.”

“I will say it. The woodchuck was *a white bear*.”

With that staggering statement Barney turned on his heel, thumbed his nose and bolted out of the yard.

The whole world seemed to be crashing about us. In a wild frenzy we dashed into the barn, seized the magic concoction and bore it out to the light of day. Barney’s *pronunciamento* of the fatal words had done its evil work. In the dregs of the potion lay unaltered a brass beer spigot, some wire, portions of a cast iron stove lid and three nails. Ruin!

Hand in hand we went back to the kitchen weeping bitterly. We declined breakfast and retired hysterical to our bedroom, refusing to explain.

Father, coupling our desolation with the book of fairy tales, threw the volume into the stove and advised us to take up the works of the late Charles Dickens.

The magic formula perished in the flames and we grew up practically penniless. Good-by gold.

* * *

I wish to state that the bird in Belgium who says he can transmute the baser metals into precious gold is the bunk.

LII

A BANQUET WITH GEORGE MALLON, THE SAVARIN OF HONOLULU

HONOLULU to some globe trotters means a swim at Waikiki, to others a permanent languor in a paradise of flowers or the soft solace of the Hawaiian songs that slide from the strings of the ukulele. But to me Honolulu will ever symbolize the meal magnificent with the miraculous George Mallon.

Not during the reign of all the Polynesian kings from Kamehameha to Kalakaua has there been a legitimate rival to Sir George. He is at one and the same time the Savarin and the Max Reinhardt of gastronomic art. He prepares his feast and paints the scenery, directs the cast and controls the lights, writes the words and music with a silver spoon and rings down the curtain on a scene of satisfaction. Long live George Mallon!

A year ago last September I visited that gorgeous collection of islands and mingled with its contented peoples, both native and foreign. It is there that all the world's creature comforts are lavishly bestowed. The jaded appetite is sharp-

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ened, hunger appeased, thirst assuaged and the soul comforted. In the catalogue of agreeable recollections, my mind reverts to the meeting with Mallon and the thrill I experienced upon receiving an invitation to break bread with the famed wizard and his bride.

"A light luncheon," said he. "A salad, a fish, something cool, a trivial entrée and a leaf of Havana. No formality. Come at 12:45; table at 1." Such was the royal command.

I hied myself to the embrace of the Pacific and came cooled and exhilarated from the cradling sea. Revitalized and keen for the great ceremony I strolled through a maze of gardens, coming at last to the cottage where the great magician composed his edible poems. A coconut, a mango, a palm, a shower tree minting its golden blossoms quivered overhead in a cool zephyr, beckoned me to the paradise.

"Find a grass mat and be comfortable," the voice came from within; a manly voice, a cordial voice. "Mrs. Mallon will join you presently." The great chef popped his head out of a glassless window and smiled benignly. "Cool enough for sherry to-day." With that suggestion he disappeared.

Mrs. Mallon appeared, fresh as a wild flower, and led me to a bower of lacelike ferns and tropical flowers. "We prefer to eat outdoors. George

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has a passion for sunlight filtered through foliage. Here he comes."

All in white duck negligee at the collar, strode the miracle man. On a bamboo mat stood three white lilies containing a pale sherry that would have driven Lucullus wild with envy.

"Salutations." It was like sipping from a jewel. In the garden compound sat a round table covered with immaculate linen and silver and glass. From the center in a large light yellow plate mounted a pyramid of fresh flowers stuck into what appeared to be a solid bank of maiden-hair ferns.

A salad composed of native fruits and vegetables and crowned with a diadem of shredded carrots appeared. It was a marvelous complication drenched with French dressing made piquant with lemon juice. No haste; followed a cigarette. Birds and butterflies were everywhere.

The director waves his baton and a small fish, one to a portion, no larger than a sardine, appears on individual islands of pale green lettuce, floating in thin chrome plates, on a flat tide of coconut milk. A boneless, infinitesimal delicacy.

The small talk livens up again. The table is cleared and Sir George appears with a box of cigars and a coffee urn under which an alcohol lamp still hooded is discerned.

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Strive as I might it was difficult for me to conceal a mild amazement at the appearance of the coffee and cigars. What was this man Mallon traveling on anyhow? I reached for a cigar, with resignation.

"Is there anything else we can offer you, Mr. Davis?" asked Mrs. Mallon with a charming concern.

"A helping from the centerpiece?" suggested Sir George.

I could think of nothing save an army mule or a Harlem goat getting a lunch from that mound of landscape gardening.

"Let's forage a bit," continued the chef rising and searching the ferns. "What's this? Coconut. Here's another and another. By Jove! A bottle of white wine just the right temperature. Not so bad."

To my utter amazement he produced from the centerpiece the materials described, perched each huge nut on a pedestal of twisted palm leaves, also taken from the ferns, and with a knife pried off the upper quarters of the shaggy shells. A thin cloud of savory mist floated to our nostrils. The wine was opened and poured. We attacked the discovery with oyster forks. It was the most marvelous single course that ever passed my lips and I went to the bottom of it. That fern centerpiece had become the center of the earth. Here's the recipe:

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NĪU MOA AI

COCONUT CHICKEN DISH

Take one fresh coconut and saw off top; remove half the meat by scraping away in shreds.

Put together three tablespoonfuls of the shredded coconut meat and two ears of fresh green corn shaved from the cob.

Slice two onions into four tablespoonfuls of diced bacon browned; add one chopped green pepper, half a dozen small tomatoes stewed with salt, pepper, clove of garlic chopped fine and cook together until it thickens. Strain this into the corn and coconut and add one spring chicken, meat cut into dice or shredded.

Put mixture into shell of coconut, using cut-off top as cover, and close tightly with a covering of flour pasted around joint to keep in flavor.

Put the sealed coconut into a pan containing half inch of water (to keep shell from scorching) for one hour in hot oven. Baste with water occasionally. This mixture will comfortably fill four coconuts.

When ready to serve send for me.

LIII

WHEN JOB HEDGES UNEARTHED A SPEECH FOR ALL OCCASIONS

AMONG the numerous after-dinner speakers famous in New York during the last twenty years the late Job Hedges stands out with singular brilliance. He was endowed with a fine elocutionary gift that enabled him to present his rare wit, wisdom and philosophy with a delicacy and power that gave charm and depth to his utterances.

During the whole competitive era in which he reigned none of his contemporaries wagged a more eloquent tongue or addressed himself with more humor to the subject in hand. He was grave or gay as the theme demanded, blending gayety with pathos and fact with fancy. In metaphor and epigram he was unrivaled. All his speeches were buttressed with common sense. Fortunate indeed the dinner chairman who could say to the guests: "We have with us to-night Job E. Hedges."

* * *

In 1924 I called upon him at his office to discuss the subject of his proposed memoirs. One of his

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numerous political acquaintances dropped in and announced his intention of delivering a speech at a district gathering.

“What I want,” said he to the master spell-binder, “is something more or less general that will fit any occasion; one of those knockout talks with some language in it; the more language the better. Gimme an idea.”

Job’s eye twinkled. “I’ve got the very thing right here in my desk. It was written by my friend, A. Parker Nevin of Princeton University. You can call it ‘The Crisis,’ ‘Justice,’ ‘Solution,’ ‘Destiny,’ or anything you want. It covers the whole range of human thought and is unanswerable. Sit down and I’ll read it aloud. I consider it a masterpiece. Now get this:”

Thereupon Job read in his best manner and with skillful pauses the following Nevin knock-out:

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: It is indeed a great and undeserved privilege to address such an audience as I see before me. At no previous time in the history of human civilization have greater problems confronted and challenged the ingenuity of man’s intellect than now. Let us look around us. What do we see on the horizon? What forces are at work? Whither are we drifting? Under what mist of clouds does the future stand obscured? My friends, casting aside the raiment of all human speech, the crucial test for the solution of all these intricate problems to which I have just alluded is the sheer and forceful

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application of those immutable laws which down the corridor of Time have always guided the hand of man, groping, as it were, for some faint beacon light for his hopes and aspirations. Without these great vital principles we are but puppets responding to whim and fancy, failing entirely to grasp the hidden meaning of it all. We must readdress ourselves to these questions which press for answer and solution. The issue cannot be avoided. There they stand. It is upon you—and you—and yet even upon me that the yoke of responsibility falls.

What, then, is our duty? Shall we continue to drift? No! With all the emphasis of my being I hurl back the message NO! Drifting must stop. We must press onward and upward toward the ultimate goal to which all must aspire. But I cannot conclude my remarks, dear friends, without touching briefly upon a subject which I know is steeped in your very consciousness. I refer to that spirit which gleams from the eyes of a newborn babe; that animates the toiling masses; that sways all the hosts of humanity past and present. Without this energizing principle all commerce, trade and industry are hushed and will perish from this earth as surely as the crimson sunset follows the golden sunshine. Mark you, I do not seek to unduly alarm or distress the mothers, fathers, sons and daughters gathered before me in this vast assemblage, but I would indeed be recreant to a high resolve which I made as a youth if I did not at this time and in this place and with the full realizing sense of responsibility which I assume publicly declare and affirm my dedication and my concentration to the eternal

A SPEECH FOR ALL OCCASIONS

principles and receipts of simple, ordinary, commonplace JUSTICE.

For what, in the last analysis, is justice? Whence does it come? where does it go? Is it tangible? It is not. Is it ponderable? It is not. Justice is none of these, and yet, on the other hand, in a sense it is all of these things combined. While I cannot tell you what justice is, this much I can tell you: that without the encircling arms of justice, without her shield, without her guardianship, the ship of state will sail through uncharted seas, narrowly avoiding rocks and shoals, headed inevitably to the harbor of calamity.

Justice! Justice! Justice! To thee we pay homage. To thee we dedicate our laurels of hope. Before thee we kneel in adoration, mindful of thy great power, mute before thy inscrutable destiny!

"Sounds good to me," remarked the amateur spellbinder. "Who's this bird Nevin?"

"Oh, just a cultured gentleman who has studied the main issues and amuses himself reducing them to simple terms such as you have just heard," said Job soothingly. "Nothing would give him more happiness than to have you make this speech in public."

"Would you mention him?"

"Not especially. You might say that you are a student of Nevin and agree with him in most of the principles enunciated. He is really the great American authority on justice and will make any sacrifice to popularize his doctrines among the plain people."

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"All right, Job," replied the visitor. "I'll slam this at them next Saturday night. I'll call the speech 'Rocks and Shoals.' "

* * *

Job later reported over the telephone:

"I heard that speech our East Side friend delivered last night."

"How did it go?"

"A riot. He had twenty vice-presidents on the platform and two pitchers of ice water."

"Did you step up afterward and congratulate him?"

"I did. But that was a tactical blunder."

"What happened?"

"One of the vice-presidents took me aside and asked me what I thought about it. 'Great,' I said. 'Looks to me,' said he, 'like George is standing on the brink of a reputation. He ain't got your easy manner, Job, and he's shy on the wise cracks, but you must admit that he certainly has got command of the English language.' "

Nevin, the author of the speech, died in New York on February 2, 1926.

* * *

Job Hedges's sense of humor never deserted him. When the shadow was upon him in Atlantic City the morning of February 10, 1924, he turned to his wife and said: "I must sit up. Help me."

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When he was adjusted among the pillows he sighed softly, winked at Mrs. Hedges and crossed the one-way river smiling.

And that's the way New Yorkers like to remember him.

LIV

A WESTERN VERDICT THAT PARALYZED AN ANCIENT DRAMA

DURING the eighties it was the custom for such actors as Kean, McCullough, Barrett, Jefferson, Florence, Sheridan and others to visit the Pacific coast, there to select local talent and render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. Thus the people of the West were enabled to enjoy good drama with a real star in the cast. The scheme worked beautifully as a rule. Once, however, dire calamity befell a production that the famous Mr. William Florence designed for a Virginia City, Nevada, audience.

The plot of the play required, in the second act, a full jury of twelve good men and true whose duty it was to render without leaving the jury box a verdict of "Guilty." Florence found on the editorial staff of the *Daily Enterprise* an old friend to whom he appealed for assistance.

"You are just the man to play the rôle of Foreman of the Jury. Pick out any eleven other gentlemen who in your opinion look the part," instructed Florence, "and when I give you the cue

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lead them solemnly into the jury box on the left side of the stage. The trial will then proceed. When the evidence is all in I, as the Judge, will instruct you as to the legal status of the prisoner and request you to bring in a verdict. Now the point is that you, as the Foreman, are to rise and reply: 'We, the jury, find the defendant *guilty*, with a recommendation to mercy.' And that's all you are to say. I'll do the rest. Is it clear to you?"

"Perfectly, Billy, and you can depend upon my getting together a jury of leading citizens," replied the old friend, "men of unimpeachable character and quality. There are more first-class jurymen in Virginia City than in any other town in Nevada. Leave it to me."

* * *

Piper's Opera House was packed from gallery to pit. Florence was at his best and the flower and chivalry of the Comstock blistered its hands with applause. The second act was set in a court room with a full cast of court officers, lawyers, witnesses, etc. The defendant, pale and anxious, gazed imploringly at Judge Florence smothered in the robes of office. As the lifted curtain revealed this impressive scene the twelve hand-picked jurymen filed solemnly to their seats. Each man carried a plug hat in the hollow of his arm and bowed to the judge with varying manifesta-

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tions of dignity. Three of them shook hands with the attorney for the defendant, the Foreman shook hands with the astonished Judge and the last man to enter the box paused and inquired of the defendant "how he felt." The entire twelve wore frock coats, black string ties and diamonds in their boiled shirts.

In view of the fact that this collection of peers contained faro dealers, bartenders, stock brokers, journalists, mining superintendents and a couple of undertakers, one would be justified in regarding the group as a fairly representative jury.

The audience was shocked with amazement—at the splendor of the twelve notable "supers" in whose hands lay the fate of the accused. The jury was nothing if not attentive to the details of the trial.

When the defendant was placed on the stand four of the jurymen settled back in their seats and lighted cigars, utterly oblivious to the stern ocular reprimand of his Honor. They sure had their minds on the case. The case finally reached conclusion after both sides summed up briefly and brilliantly.

A deathlike silence followed, the Judge frowning down at the cowering accused, who leaned forward to catch the words of the charge to the jury. Judge Florence smoothed out his robes and turned to the deliberate dozen. His speech was brief and fraught with ominous suggestion.

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"You will withdraw," he said finally, "take consultation with your conscience and bring in your verdict."

"Your Honor," spake the Foreman measuring his words, "our minds are already made up."

"Gentlemen of the jury," replied the Judge, "what is your verdict?"

The Foreman tossed a cigar butt on the floor, wiped his lips slowly and bent a kindly eye on the defendant.

"Well, I'll tell you, Judge," said he, "we ain't crazy about the way this case has been conducted. Now take that witness over there," pointing to one of the cast; "we regard him as a perjurer. Said he heard the seven shooter *bark*. A seven shooter don't *bark*; it *spits*. What's more, you couldn't kill a man with a seven shooter. There are men in this town who have been riddled with seven shooters and they haven't since missed a meal."

Judge Florence folded his arms and looked down on the Foreman in amazement mixed with contempt. He seemed to have lost all power of speech.

"This defendant," went on the Foreman, extracting a fresh cigar from his vest pocket, "looks like a high-class man to us, a man incapable of doing murder. Now you take the testimony of that witness seated by the attorney for the prose-

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cution. He's got what I call a rabbit face, and rabbit-faced men are notorious liars. I wouldn't believe—"

The Judge found his tongue.

"The evidence demands a verdict of guilty," said he, rustling all over.

"Not in this state," declared the Foreman between his teeth. "And if you want to know the consensus of opinion among this jury we are convinced that an attempt is being made to railroad this innocent party to the gallows, and it don't go."

A ripple of concurrence swept through the audience.

"And in conclusion," striking a match on his thigh, "we don't care a damn about the case anyhow."

The regular cast was spellbound. Judge Florence for once in his life was overpowered by the trend of events. The jury, headed by the Foreman, rose from their seats and faced the court.

"But," concluded the Foreman with a display of indifference, "if you really want our verdict, it is 'Not guilty.' " And with that parting shot the jury arose as one man and left the jury box with their plug hats on.

Florence pounded on his desk with the gavel, restored order and, rising in a cataract of black silk, said in thunderous tones:

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“The case is dismissed owing to a lack of evidence.”

The curtain fell in a gale of laughter on the second act and Virginia City went back to its Comstock lode.

LV

THE "KICK" IN AUSTRIA THAT SENT ME BACK TO NEVADA

VIENNA, October 15, 1926.

WITH true American energy, after learning that this city had a population of only two million people, I decided to spend a couple of days scanning its places of interest. With the aid of stimulants I got my guide into the Naturhistorisches Staatsmuseum at 4:15 P.M. the second day. My schedule called for accelerated action up to 4:45, the point of saturation. In a few breathless moments we arrived at a room containing a splendid mounted specimen of the African elephant, standing upon a raised structure, the trunk waving aloft and the small beady eyes glittering.

"With one shot," explained my guide, "this handsome male specimen was slain in Africa many years ago by a member of the royal family and presented to the museum. The weapon used was an elephant gun weighing twelve pounds and firing a ball of two ounces. The recoil was so great as to prostrate the hunter; but the shot was fatal." I viewed the stuffed pachyderm indifferently.

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"Ach! It is plain that you have no knowledge of the violence of the elephant gun." He placed an index finger against his left nostril, a Teutonic signal that something definite has just been said.

Little did he know that at that moment he was standing in the presence of the party who pulled the trigger and discharged the last round of elephant ammunition fired in the United States of America. I threw him one long, pitying look, closed my eyes and let the panorama of the Staatsmuseum dissolve into space. The astral kick that followed sent me backward over forty years half way around the world.

In the northwest corner of Ormsby county, Nevada, after the Civil War an honest farmer by the name of Winnie took up some acres and fashioned himself a comfortable farm to which he brought his bride and to which subsequently came his children. A splendid grove of cottonwood and poplar trees surrounded his residence. For pastime he raised the finest cantaloupes and watermelons that ever ripened in the summer sun. Any visitor to the Winnie farm could eat his fill free of charge, while the Squire, combing his long white beard, discoursed on his travels. To us boys he was a greater man than Marco Polo.

He attained the height of celebrity when we learned through his son Lee that he had spent two years in Africa and that he had *slain elephants*. "*Killed 'em dead in their tracks.*"

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“And the gun he done it with hangs over the mantelpiece in the parlor,” said Lee proudly. “I’ll show it to you.” My brother Bill and I were escorted into the sacred chamber there to view the gargantuan weapon. It hung on a pair of deer horns. The barrel was about the length and shape of a crowbar and the muzzle almost an inch in diameter. From the trigger guard hung a powder horn and a buckskin sack containing a dozen or more massive bullets. What bloody recitals could that rifle give? We left the room on tiptoe conjecturing the strength of the shoulder that could withstand its terrible kick.

“Every year,” said Lee, when we had left the presence of the red slayer, “the old man takes it down, draws the charge and reloads it again.”

Whose would be the fortunate finger to press that trigger once more? That thought took form then and there. But it was a mute moment. The next day Bill and I whispered the news through the town. Guy Fawkes’s gunpowder plot was juvenile stuff in comparison.

On the following Saturday afternoon five desperate picked men trekked it to the Winnie farm, laid in a cargo of muskmelon and informed Lee that we had come up to have a look at the elephant gun.

The Squire was over at Little’s farm swapping a cow, and like a true host Lee brought the great weapon out on the lawn, when the plotters began

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to clamor for a demonstration. Lee, with a sinister smile, resigned the rifle to the majority. The question of who should fire the shot was reduced to the short straw. *It was drawn by me!*

I brushed the losers back as flies are driven from molasses and held the coveted trophy in both arms while scanning the landscape in search of something to receive the ponderous bullet which Allan Quatermain, Jr., was about to turn loose. Thirty yards away, basking in the bright sunlight, lay a sixty-pound watermelon.

Reclining full length on the grass I leveled the lethal crowbar at the great green fruit, the muzzle of the destroyer resting on a block of wood. The envious spectators stuffed their fingers in their ears. I cocked the hammer and disclosed the bright copper percussion cap on the nipple. Oh, Lordy!

Brother Bill, ever thoughtful, hastily placed at the soles of my feet a six-foot cottonwood fence post designed to keep me from backing out of the county when the explosion came. With alert eye along the barrel I caught the ivory front sight, drew a bead . . . and pressed . . . the trigger.

All that I remember seeing was a waterspout of pink spray leaping into space, followed by a backward movement on my part, as the fence post rolled up my legs and spine, smashing me violently at the base of the so-called brain.

I was revived by a gentle rain of watermelon

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dew which fell steadily, mixed with rind, through the cottonwood grove. A scar in the lawn a foot wide and fifteen feet in length defined the course of my retirement. Enough grass roots and earth to resod the place were still clinging to my face and plugging my mouth. My right shoulder appeared to have slipped down by my hip.

Across the field, summoned by the crashing echoes, came Squire Winnie on the dead jump, while against the horizon in three different directions fled the conspirators. The Squire took in all the terrible details at a glance, reserving the last withering look for the maimed wretch recumbent on the sward.

And then: Wrath of Hercules. He picked up the once-loved firearm, stepped over to the woodpile and smashed the elephant gun, lock, stock and barrel, into smithereens. Even the steel cylinder bent under the last blow and was cast from him defamed, degraded, disgraced, for all time.

With his own ears he had heard the final bellow that had announced the hurling of its noble projectile into the heart of a sleeping watermelon. All Africa heard that echo.

* * *

Alone I walked out of the Staatsmuseum at 4:35 with a throbbing pain in my right shoulder, and left Vienna for Italy on a fast train at 7:21.

LVI

PATENT DEVICE FOR DRIVING A GOLF BALL FAR AND NEAR

I SEE by the papers that a Syracuse and a St. Louis golf player fought a duel with golf balls at Orlando, Florida. The distance was fifty yards and the weapons one driver, one iron and twelve rounds of ammunition each. After one shot in the shin and a return in the ribs a cop stepped out and declared it a tie. Honor was satisfied.

* * *

During the War, at which period inventors throughout the world evinced great activity, I took out patent papers on the "Davis Long Distance Driving Iron." The idea upon which the invention was based came to me one autumn afternoon at the seventh hole of the Dunwoodie Golf Club, hard by the city of Yonkers. So strong was the impulse to put the gigantic and original thought into concrete form that I climbed over the fence, grabbed a train at the Putnam railroad depot and hurried back to New York.

Concealed behind a tobacco screen in the smok-

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ing car I drew a rough plan, actual size, of the forthcoming improvement in driving irons. Upon reaching home I displayed the plans to friend Golf Widow, with conservative estimates as to my rake-off when it was placed on the market. The applause was sensationally feeble.

Nevertheless, I repaired to a small machine shop on West Fifty-sixth street, where I took a metal worker into conference, explaining that secrecy must be guaranteed.

"If it has anything to do with firearms, machine guns or high explosives," he informed me, "I cannot consider it. In times of war the law—"

"Calm yourself," I interrupted. "Mine is an invention that has to do with peace and pastimes."

I explained in detail the amazing possibilities of my novel creation. He seemed to grasp the principles as set forth in the rough drawings and agreed to make me one for the sum of ten dollars, five down and the balance upon delivery.

"Fair enough." In a few days I dropped in, suggested retempering the outer blade and had the pyramid pillar set back $1/64$ of an inch. It was on that particular feature that I expected to get my basic patent. Right there the national surplus was supposed to be slumbering. He finished the job shipshape, got his remaining five and wished me luck. Without delay I went to a

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patent lawyer and had papers and drawings prepared, rushing the same to Washington under registered special delivery. I took the device to Julian Curtis of Spalding Brothers.

"This is a dangerous implement," he said after the once over. "But I will keep your secret. Make your exit through the alley."

Monopoly!

My next intuition was to call on my friend Hughes, the golf expert in Von Lengerke and Detmold's, now of the firm of Low and Hughes, and swear him to secrecy in order to get the head properly shafted. He agreed to do the job at night after the traffic had ceased. Unsolicited, however, he voiced an opinion that seemed uncalled for.

"This will be prohibited," said he.

"By whom?" I asked quietly.

"The American Golf Association."

"W-h-y?" I spelled.

"Because it is a device, a mechanism made of separate parts. A golf iron must be a single piece of metal."

"Bunk. If I get the distance public demand will do the rest. Shaft it." I had the courage of my convictions.

"Can't be used in tournaments."

"There are plenty of amateurs who hate tournaments, and will buy my club at ten dollars a throw! You can see the dividends."

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The weapon was delivered the next day. I smeared the outer plate with beeswax borrowed from my wife's workbasket, traced the magic phrase:

PATENT APPLIED FOR

and etched it deep with muriatic acid, most of which fell on the only Turkish rug on the premises. No insurance.

I then phoned Handsome Jack Clark, who taught me to leave home and play golf in three easy lessons, and invited him to Dunwoodie, there to witness the first experimental test. As a protection against prying eyes the great invention was encased in a woolen sock tied over the club head. In response to Mr. Clark's continued inquisition I explained, guardedly, what the sock concealed. He took fire with enthusiasm.

"I'll pay the cost of the patent for a half interest," was his heroic cash proposition.

"You'll give me a matter of two hundred dollars for a fortune, will you? No, no! Inventor takes all. I'm like Edison and Ford."

He was too much of a gentleman to argue the matter. We jazzed up the hill to the clubhouse and came upon Mr. Jack Mackie, the club pro. He was busy compiling a chemical cocktail for some visiting angleworms that had moved into the eighteenth green. The canny Scot scented something at once.

DEVICE FOR DRIVING A GOLF BALL

“Wot ha’ ye got there, laddie?” I made a prophetic and boastful speech and unmasked the iron. “Gi’ us a bash wi’ it.”

Why not? Here was one of the longest drivers in Christendom. What better test of the iron’s powers? Smothering a paternal impulse to be the first I passed it over to the Lowlander. He studied, hefted and wobbled it. Two caddies, Mr. Clark and the inventor stood by in wonderment.

Mackie took a golf ball from his pocket, stepped off the green and placed the white sphere on the crest of a dirt tee. His stance reminded me of the Colossus of Rhodes. Instinctively the gallery moved away. A brief address, a long, even back swing, a flexing at the left knee, a fractional hesitation at the top of the swing:

“Bang!” In the twinkling of an eye, in a flash of incandescence, the Davis Long Distance Driving Iron became a firearm, a machine gun and a high explosive. Spowie! Its metal components were torn asunder, sparks flew, steel fragments flashed on high, the neck divorced itself from the blade and leaped across the lawn. Bingo! A caddie screamed as a splinter from the shaft endowed him with a superb cauliflower ear that bloomed at once. Mr. Clark dove behind an apple tree with the second caddie and the inventor lost ten pounds of personal fat. Fragments of his driving iron rained on the landscape for at least

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fifteen minutes. Mackie, the assassin, miraculously escaped unscathed.

* * *

We wish now to call attention to the excellence of our driving iron for dueling, suicide and the destruction of property, and to make the further claim that in two strokes it could have settled the Orlando affair and crippled the cop into a life pension.

See patent papers on file in Washington, D. C., for further particulars.

LVII

STRANGE CAREER OF BERLENBACH, PRODIGY OF THE PRIZE RING

A FEW short weeks ago the middle-aged Mike McTigue tore a four years' growth of laurels from the brow of Jack the Giant Killer and swaggered onward in search of fresh wreaths.

* * *

The passing of Paul Berlenbach, the Astoria Killer, is something more than a mere shifting of names in the register of champions. Curiously out of the welter steps the defeated man greater by far than his conqueror.

Not since the profession of boxing became profitable in the United States and through all the serial story of the rise and fall of disciples of the manly art is there any stranger chapter than the life of this wrestler who turned boxer and swept a fortune of \$300,000 into his coffers.

In order to analyze this remarkable personality and his still more amazing genesis one must turn back to the first half of his existence, during which, for a period of twelve years or thereabouts,

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he was deaf and dumb. His sole means of communication with others was through the written word. Being wholly without auricular or vocal powers, the sum total of his knowledge was gathered slowly and with an arresting reluctance to compete on an even footing with those more generously endowed.

Physically he was as nearly perfect as a mortal could be. From infancy he had the frame and the muscles of an Atlas. Aside from that inheritance young Berlenbach was blessed with the kindest disposition and an engaging patience. Among the boys of the neighborhood at Throgs Neck, the Bronx, where he lived, Paul, in spite of his afflictions, became the leader. In his own small wordless and soundless world, solely because of his kindness and adult strength, he became the dictator among the younger and weaker boys. The adoration in which he was held is a tradition and the affection he inspired in his comrades has not diminished through the years.

At that period of his life when it seemed that he was doomed to a career of silence and that no human agency or scientific advancement could rescue him, the lightning struck and a miracle was born. One need not be a devotee of the prize ring to appreciate the magnificent proportions of that event.

A kite which some boys were flying became entangled in the overhead wires of an electric light

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line. The all-knowing leader was summoned to the scene for consultation. After a brief but critical examination of the calamity he threw off his coat and climbed a telegraph pole to the cross arms. As he approached his goal he seized with both hands a high powered electric light cable charged with destruction. There was a blinding flash, a dull quaking explosion and a plume of smoke. Berlenbach crumpled in mid-air and fell like a spineless manikin nineteen feet to the cement pavement, where he lay as one electrocuted. Amid the lamentations of his companions he was removed and medical aid summoned. For hours he was insensible, and the heart fluttered between life and death. Several days elapsed before he recovered his shattered strength.

And then the unexpected happened. He began to hear. Through the long dormant drums of his ears sounds began to penetrate. His attitude was that of a listener; the strange echoes startled him, the voices of those about him brought bewilderment. Words that have never been heard can never be spoken. The articulations that crowded in upon Berlenbach's now sensitive ears meant nothing to him. There came a time, however, when the oft-repeated speech of others began to impinge upon his intelligence and his once useless tongue took up the physical task of communication, and as the child is taught, so was Berlenbach taught to pronounce his thoughts in words.

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The miracle was complete. The doctors were never able to determine whether it was the shock of myriad electric volts or the impact on the pavement that opened his ears and lips. The fact remains, however, that since that terrible ordeal Berlenbach could hear and put his thoughts into words.

With all his five senses sparking in unison he continued to grow in physical strength. His frame filled and the might in his muscles increased. It seemed almost that the electric tide that swept through him aloft had charged him with the power of Hercules; that the static flash had plated him with an invisible armor. He became a wrestler, the best of his weight, in whose terrific embrace other wrestlers wilted and surrendered. He marched through the ranks of contemporary gladiators and broke them with his hands. The prize ring, with its profits and its continued action, lured him, so he crawled between the ropes and waited for the gong.

His meteoric career in the squared circle was the wonder of the decade and a joy to the boxing fans. Wherever he appeared the house was packed to the last seat. His fame reached the outposts and from all directions claimants came to take his gauge. Like Henry Pierce, the indomitable "Game Chicken" of England, who was conquered only by death, Berlenbach met all comers and took no backward step. He brought

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to the prize ring that, alas! too infrequent attribute in these piping times of pelf, unconquerable courage. He fought always to win and the spectators knew that when he stepped from his corner they would see a fight.

In the bald and coarse statistics of pugilism he piled up twenty-three knock-outs in succession, twenty of them in the first round. This tops Jack Dempsey's record of seventeen and Stanley Ketchel's of twenty-one. And the marvel of it is that to this day there is not a single mark of the prize ring or the wrestling mat on any spot of his wonderful body. A still greater mystery is that the thunderbolt which struck him down when he was a boy seemed to have left him unscathed.

Within four years he has risen from the amateur ranks to the professional pinnacle and made a fortune. His honor has never been assailed, and in the sport that has frequently reached million-dollar gate receipts he stands out as a singularly gallant and remarkable man.

Assuming that Paul Berlenbach has lived but half of his life, counting his boyhood as no life at all, one may reasonably come to the conclusion that McTigue's victory was little more than the defeat of a youngster whose batteries had run low at a critical period of his overtaxed juvenility.

I read the announcement of his exit from the ring, yet I prophesy that he will return.

LVIII

THE EPIC OF THE FOREIGN NAME IN THE MAINE GRAVEYARD

ALONG the New England coast, not far from where the Penobscot River empties into the broad Atlantic, a small, sparsely settled burying ground lies against the slope that receives the first rays of the morning sun. On the gravestones one may see such names as Silas, Jethro, Luther, Adam, Joshua, Luke, and so on. These bones of the silent are the bones of the Pilgrims and their posterity. Among them sleep Mary, Sarah, Penelope, Priscilla, Cynthia and Martha. Beside the headstone that marks the grave of Captain Silas and his family is one that contains the single word:

ALBERTO

Several years ago a visitor passed reverently through that quiet compound and read upon the monuments the details of life and death that had resisted the elements through two hundred years. With him was an aged New Englander, who told as best he could the stories and the legends of

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the past as they had been handed down from generation to generation.

“It is amazing,” was the comment of the visitor, “that all these names are distinctively early American, both among the men and women buried here. Without exception they are of English origin, aside from the one name ‘Alberto.’ I should like to know how this foreign word, which may be either Spanish or Italian, came to be chiseled in the granite?”

“I can explain that, sir,” responded the old guide, “if I may spin the yarn from its beginning. About a hundred years ago down at Belfast by the mouth of the river there was a seagoing man known as Captain Silas. He mastered a square rigger that he built of Maine timber with his own hands. She was a kind of clipper in her way and was rated fast and seaworthy. Captain Silas built her to go round the Horn and up the west coast of South America. He gave her several trial trips coastwise up and down the Atlantic between Nova Scotia and the West Indies, always because of her speed takin’ on a cargo from port to port. Had a crew of Maine boys and took ’em on shares.

“In Jamaica he picked up a black man to do his cookin’. Biggest Negro ever seen in these parts; six foot four, and the best man that ever set foot in a ship’s galley. Captain Silas became attached to him and decided to sign him on for the trip around the Horn. Captain himself was a small

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man, a foot shorter than the cook, and not weighin' much more'n a hundred and thirty pound. But a brave and fearless one. There he lies at your feet, but still alive in Maine records.

"He picked up a mixed cargo down the coast and a lot of fancy stuff at New York. In the West Indies he took on molasses, sugar, spices, tobacco and a few hogsheads of rum. There was money in blackbirdin' those days, but Captain Silas would have none of that. He was out for the merchant marine. From the Caribbean he set sail for Cape Horn, touchin' at South American ports on the way down. Met up with some foul weather and had to put into Pernambuco for repairs. A three days' hurricane afterward drove him into Montevideo, where he took on a new set of sails and restowed his cargo. Ship was dry and taut, but the riggin' had gone by the board. Not a man left the vessel, although Captain Silas announced that if any of them wished to turn back he would pay their passage home. 'Those who wish to go on, step out,' he said. The Negro cook was the first man to come forward and all the rest of the crew were on his heels. It was Cape Horn or bust with them.

"Well, they ran into gale after gale from that time on, with the temperature droppin' and the conditions growin' worse. The ship's hull was as strong as the rock of Gibraltar, but the wind liked to blow the sticks out of her. The fourth month

THE EPIC OF THE FOREIGN NAME

out of Belfast, Maine, they sighted Cape Virgin, at the entrance to the Strait of Magellan, where the ship struck and began to go to pieces. They stuck to her all night, and at daybreak Captain Silas ordered the lifeboats launched. Just as the Captain was about to leave the ship, being the last man, an ice-covered hawser, loose in the gale, struck him and he fell insensible.

“The Negro cook leaped from one of the lifeboats, picked Captain Silas up, jumped back with him into the frail craft as it was receding from the ship on the crest of a wave. When the order came to leave the ship the Jamaican had put on a big double-breasted ulster that he had brought from Maine. Under that garment next to his breast he placed the unconscious Captain Silas and buttoned him in as a mother enfolds her child, protecting him for three hours against the frozen spondrift, and keeping him alive with the warmth of his body. The cook and the men at the oars were covered with ice when the lifeboat went ashore. Not until a fire was made and a sail tent pitched would the Negro open his ulster.

“When the white man came to and opened his eyes he found himself in the arms of the black man, who had chafed the life back into his thin body. It was as fine a deed of service as any man would wish to see. Captain Silas knew that the cook had saved his life, and every man of the crew, including the two boats that later came

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ashore, took his hat off when he came into the tent where Silas lay in the Negro's arms. The next day he carried the Captain ten miles to a settlement without once putting him down. My friend, that Jamaica cook's name was Alberto."

"So!" the visitor to the graveyard exclaimed, "this is where his body lies." /

"You haven't guessed it, stranger," resumed the yarn spinner. "There is something more to tell. Captain Silas and his crew worked their way back up the eastern coast, got a ship and returned to Belfast, where Alberto quit the sea and came to the home of the man he saved. Not long after a son was born to the wife of Captain Silas, a son who was taught by his parents to respect and honor Alberto, the black man who was his companion and his friend until he died. The bones of the Negro were shipped back to Jamaica for Christian burial."

"What, then, is this name on the headstone?" asked the stranger.

The spinner of the yarn had come to his climax. "That, sir, is the name of the brave man that Captain Silas picked out as fit to bestow upon his first born. It belonged to the black Alberto. To his way of thinkin' and to mine, sir, it was fit for any white boy to wear."

LIX

THE BIRTHRIGHT OF THE APPLE THAT WAS BATTLE BORN

THIS road leads to Rome.

In the village of Chambersburg (now called Eureka), southern part of Gallia county, Ohio, during the fifties and sixties lived one Joshua Martin Clark. He operated a grist mill, ran a line of small side-wheelers up and down the river and over into the Mississippi country, traded, farmed and held forth as more or less of a Pooh-Bah among the people of that section. Whenever anything important was about to occur Joshua knew all about it.

In a neighboring town was a country physician by the name of Griffith, who, besides being an all-around medical man of the old school, was equally well equipped with a profound and almost uncanny knowledge of how far man could safely go in the grafting of apple trees. When he was not doing surgery for the neighbors he was transferring the slips of one tree to another and waiting for results. He married and divorced and remarried again every apple tree in the district.

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He succeeded in getting a few good results and a great many bad ones. From time to time he brought the offspring to his friend Joshua.

It is quite as difficult to produce a perfect apple as it is to bring a perfect human being into this world. Dr. Griffith was aware of this and continued with the patience of Burbank to tamper with the progeny of the orchards.

Toward the close of the War the patient experimentalist called on his friend, the Chambersburg man, and asked for another conference.

"The time has come," said he, "when I can offer what I consider an achievement. Eight years have been spent in this attempt to create an apple that will stand all the tests and make a reputation for itself. From the first grafts and through all the progressive steps since then I have used the utmost care. No child even ever came into the world under more deliberate observation. I want you to look at this fruit and taste it."

Dr. Griffith took from his pocket a beautiful apple, deep red in tone and shot with white stripes. The skin was smooth and of high polish, doubtless due to the caresses it had received from the hands of its creator.

"Smells like the Garden of Eden, Doc," said the steamboat man, pressing the exquisite fruit to his nostrils. "What do you call it?"

"Haven't made up my mind yet. Must have a

THE BIRTHRIGHT OF THE APPLE

name, of course, that is, if it is ever to amount to anything. What would you suggest?"

"Why not the Griffith? You brought it into existence and it should bear your name."

"Nonsense! Egotistical! Seems to me that it should have a name that suggests the region where it was born. That has permanency, whereas my name will perish with me. No, Joshua, we'll have to do better than that. Try again."

The two old friends sat down on a bundle of shingles and talked the matter over. During the discussion the son of Boss Clark came along, caught a whiff of the red apple and joined the conference in the hope that something more entertaining than mere talk would come to pass.

In the end, following much argument, the creator of the apple was induced to name it after the township in which he lived.

"Now that it is christened with a given name and a surname let us commemorate the event by cutting it into three pieces; one for you, one for your son and one for me. If it tastes as good to all of us as it looks, the years I have devoted to its development have not been wasted." Dr. Griffith put his suggestion into immediate effect. "Always get a boy's opinion when you want to know about an apple."

Its flavor was nothing new to the doctor, but the Clark end of the jury of three went into ecstasies of applause. The boy wanted to know if the

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tree was within walking distance of Chambersburg.

“There are plenty where that came from, son,” said the father of the apple, “and I’ll send your father a box. What I want you to remember, young man, is that you were present when this apple got its name. Perhaps in the future somebody might want to know about it and you may be the only man alive who was at the christening. Just keep that in mind.”

Fruit growers all along the Ohio and the Mississippi took slips from the parent tree and within ten years that red and white apple brought into the world by Dr. Griffith was being shipped by the thousands of boxes throughout the Middle West.

* * *

Fifty years later a New York silk merchant visiting Spokane, Washington, while passing the offices of the Northern Pacific Railroad, on Sprague avenue, caught sight of an embankment of apple boxes piled high behind the plate glass windows. The glistening red and white exhibit, brought to a high state of perfection in that famous region, burst upon him without warning. He stopped bewildered. What of the past was awakening in the dim background of his memory? He had seen that apple half a century ago. The scene dissolved; he was once more seated on some shingles munching one-third of an exquisite

THE BIRTHRIGHT OF THE APPLE

apple, the flavor of which still hovered on his tongue, and the aroma in his nostrils.

What if that apple had lost its birthright in the interval? Remembering the injunction of old Dr. Griffith, he stepped inside. What had time done to history?

"If you please," he began, his heart sinking, "can you give me the name and the origin of that red and white apple in the window?"

"That, my friend," answered the genial Washingtonian, "is the Rome Beauty. But I don't think anybody in this section can tell you anything about its origin."

"I can," answered the visitor, a great sensation of joy welling up in his soul. "It was named after Rome township, seat of Gallia county in the State of Ohio. I was present when it was christened. Dr. Griffith brought that apple into this world and my father, Joshua Clark, named it. I thank the Lord that it has not lost its baptismal right in all these intervening years. For sale I suppose, by the box?"

"All over town," replied the railroad man, laughing.

"I shall want a dozen shipped East immediately," replied Joshua A. Clark, the silk merchant, "and may I ask that when this apple is mentioned in future you will explain that Rome is in Ohio, which is in the United States, so far as apples are concerned."

LX

A STORY FOR BASS FISHERMEN UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS

WHILE I shall here but once recall in print the night of July 5, upon which the Fourth was this year (1926) celebrated, it will come back to me in my sleeping and waking hours as long as life lasts. There are blue moons and blue Mondays in every man's past, but this is a red Monday in the black of the blackest night.

* * *

I was standing on the shore of a Long Island pond, about 10 o'clock, with Mr. Charles R. Flint, a stockholder in the Lord's outdoors. The sky was overcast with banks of high riding clouds; not a star was in sight. No vestige of light sifted through the envelope of imponderable gloom. Where the hills converged with the water line there was a faint suggestion of the element that marks horizon, but beyond there was little else than intangibility. A faint breeze, wayward as a human breath, came from nowhere and died a-bornin'. A subtle perfume from the rich foliage

A STORY FOR BASS FISHERMEN

along the somber shore touched our nostrils and was gone. All the night cries born of the dark were stilled. In the profound silence of the velvet black we stood a few feet apart listening for some manifestation that the sensate world had not come to an everlasting hush.

Suddenly in the midst of that oppressive quiet a phosphorescent bloom welled as a large fish broke through the thin layer of vegetation and plunged back into the depths of the pool. The luminous spray rose and fell again.

“Bass!”

The word mingled as a twin exclamation. We set up a lively conversation, relieved at last. Far off in a nameless direction another monster lunged and returned to the water.

Inoculation! The fish were rising.

“Did you ever plug for bass in the night time?” I asked my companion.

“No. Will they bite?”

“Come with me. The conditions are perfect.” I hurried back to the cottage where I had two casting rods equipped with white floating baits.

We pushed away from the shore out on the pool. The surface was as smooth as glass. Silently, with slow moving oars, I pulled in the general direction of the northwest arm of the pond. As we moved the mist seemed to rise and the water took on a suggestion of light. Free at last from the shadows of the shore, we were able to dis-

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tinguish the land points that appeared like rivers of tar pouring in upon us from three directions.

A heron, disturbed by our nearness to the shore, hurried away squawking. While we could not see the bird there was disclosed at each movement of its wings an intermittent point of light as though a firefly had become lodged in the feathers and was working its spark plug in harmony with the flight of its living vehicle. There were at least twenty distinct flashes of diminishing visibility as the bird flew out of our vision. It was a weird spectacle in a weird setting.

I ceased rowing and listened. Two more fish broke water ponderously. Familiar with the land and water route, I pulled toward familiar ground and let the boat glide of its own inertia to rest.

"Shoot one toward the shore," I suggested, "and let it lie a moment. If nothing happens jerk the plug lightly. Then reel in your slack line and jerk it again. Try that for a few feet and then reel in for another cast. Take your time."

"How can they see the plug in the dark?" he asked, unbelieving.

"I don't know, but they can. Shoot another one." The bait floated into the night as the reel purred. Just as it struck the water I discerned his gentle wrist movement as C. R. lifted the tip of his rod.

Bang!

"I've got one!" he exclaimed, sinking the barb.

A STORY FOR BASS FISHERMEN

Smash! The fish rose full length and struck on his side. The phosphorus bloomed again. There was a thrashing on the water and the bass went down for the weeds.

"Put the flashlight out there."

Simultaneously with his request a skyrocket, twenty-four hours behind the schedule, hissed out of Smithtown and exploded in a red shower, lighting our faces.

"Wh-e-e. . . . Fireworks!"

The fish rose again just as an aërial bomb bidding farewell to Commack hit the sky and exploded into a golden flower pot, its flaming blossoms falling behind the hills.

"Gimme the net!"

"No net. Tire him out and I'll take him in by the lower jaw," I urged.

The fish ran under the boat, broke on the other side and lunged back again. Somewhere in the direction of Northport a flash of light blazed and vanished. The distant reverberation of a splintering echo reached us after a lapse of time. Far up in the sky a fire balloon was wavering its way toward the Sound.

"How about this fish? He's as strong as ever," announced C. R.

Another skyrocket curved in the east and gave birth to five green carnations, which fell apart in marvelous maculations.

The bass made another rush and turned over on

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his side, the white of his belly resembling a streak of foam lying on the surface of the water. The flashlight revealed his exhaustion. I took him in by the lower jaw. Three pounds.

I made four casts toward the open water. Five—

Smash! Smash! Missed it both times and struck again. "He's on!" Another aërial rose in the dark and littered a cascade of stars.

"Some Fourth!"

"Some fishing!"

We flung our lures until midnight and took seven bass in all, one weighing four and a half pounds. By the witching hour the spectacle in the sky was over. Only the occasional thrashing among the bass in the fish box beneath my seat broke the silence. We rowed back to shore thrilled with the beauty of the night, a pair of pounding hearts.

A few Rialto fireflies gave us a reception as we ground the pebbles with our keel and stepped out on the shore. Light winds began to ripple down the lake; the trees rustled again.

A lighted candle, a pipe, a boastful review of a perfect night, an exquisite lassitude; and so to bed and dreams.

(1)

THE END

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